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1971: Labor's Rough Year

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The ILWU Won't Freeze

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Vietnam Veterans
The Wounded Wait in Line

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LETTERS

in the name of security

Cincinnati, Ohio

DEAR SIRS: What follows here is an unrealistically long Letter to the Editor. But I am not an "expert"; I cannot deal with this little fragment or that: the world is a whole —life is a whole—and even what I write here is but the "tip of an iceberg" floating in a sea of perplexity.

Twenty-one years ago I said our aid to the French in Vietnam was a mistake. It was obviously because:

(*1*) You don't base your survival on the rescue of a dying system. The European colonial system was obviously dying even before 1950. . . .

(*2*) You don't provide for the security of the people of the United States by supporting obsolete and tyrannical governments. Of the more than 130 governments in the world, only about twelve are as free as we are and as firmly wedded to such freedom (with its imperfections and limitations). There are about twelve more which share this condition at the moment but have had repressive dictatorships at one time or another during this century. *All the rest of the world is not free* (and most of it is not Communist), and therefore is unlikely to achieve major changes in a peaceful way. Unless these changes can occur, by reform if possible, and by revolution if necessary, our peace and prosperity are insecure.

To support global counterinsurgency is to condemn America to a gigantic waste of its resources in the maintenance of obsolete regimes which waste their own human and natural resources. This only guarantees us—and the rest of the world—an uncontrollable instability, both societal and ecological, which carries with it the threat of global warfare and eco-catastrophe.

(*3*) You don't enhance the probabilities of long-run security for the people of the United States by stirring up a "revolution of rising expectations" with moral preachments and an aggressive display of material wealth, while at the same time providing the military wherewithal with which to prevent these expectations from being realized. More specifically, if these mass expectations happen, in a given country, to be captured by a local Communist leadership, you cannot possibly increase your own security by unleashing the mechanical marvels of the U.S. Air Force upon that country's populace. If they are following a revolutionary leader (who may be a Communist, but often is not), it is because they see no peaceful solution to their problems and because they see a chance of obtaining the food, the land, the opportunities long denied them by oppressive native and/or foreign elites. Our armed forces cannot give them land, food, education, dignity, initiative, or opportunity in general. Their leaders may or may not be able to do this. But that is something they must find out for themselves, which brings us to the next point:

(*4*) America cannot take over and solve other peoples' problems. The societal and ecological problems of each country can be handled only by "the natives." They are the ones who face the day-to-day problems that arise out of their own heritage, their own habitat, and their own understandings. We, and other advanced societies, can provide some of the needed technical and financial assistance, but only *on the terms and at the initiative* of those who need it. We are limited—as *all* peoples are—by an inescapable ethnocentrism.

A liberal, it has always seemed to me, is one who treasures humane values and opposes tyranny. You can't be that kind of liberal and endorse global counterinsurgency, for that places you wholeheartedly—violently—on the side of the *status quo*. The *status quo* in most countries is inhumane and tyrannical. Rostow, Rusk, Kennedy, et al., are therefore not liberals—not if you accept my definition of the term.

We have been told again and again by these "liberals" that we are the protectors of the "free world." Yet, as I

(*Continued on page 180*)

EDITORIALS

A Leaf from Metternich

While applauding President Nixon's breakaway from two decades of unreality in regard to China, it is desperately important to keep in mind that peace, and a peaceable world, depend in the first instance on what kind of arrangements we can work out with the Soviet Union. And the great danger is that, regardless of his motives, if Mr. Nixon is not both exceptionally adroit and lucky his overtures to Peking will produce a devastating reaction from the USSR.

Already, the Kremlin's chief Washington watcher, Yuri Arbatov, has warned that the Administration's move "is a matter of grave consequence for the Soviet people, for world socialism, for the entire international situation, for world peace." But one should not be deceived by the comparatively mild wording of the Arbatov article in *Pravda* of August 10. There simply is no way to overstate the seriousness with which Moscow views American-Chinese relations. If there has been one dominant motif above all others in Soviet foreign policy thinking of the past three years, it is the fear and suspicion of Washington-Peking collusion. Again and again, with increasing emphasis, the Russians have returned to this theme in conversations both here and in the Soviet Union. Three years ago—even three or four months ago—it seemed ridiculous to the point of fantasy.

The perception of foreign policies by others makes its own reality. In a way, that Moscow should think the Nixon approach to China to be aimed at the USSR is more important than whether or not Mr. Nixon so intends it. At the moment, it is almost certain, Moscow suspects an anti-Soviet ploy.

The danger of a Soviet reaction is so obvious that one is tempted to assume the Nixon foreign policy makers must be aware of it. But on that score the history of Western relations with the Soviet Union is not reassuring. Time and again, almost from the Bolshevik revolution, the West has made diplomatic thrusts at the Soviet Union —at least moves Moscow was bound to interpret as thrusts—only to be confounded when there followed not only a deft Soviet parry but also a sharp Soviet counterthrust. Consider, for example, the *cordon sanitaire*, followed by Rapallo; Munich, followed by the Nazi-Soviet Pact; the whole series of our moves in postwar Germany, followed by Soviet initiatives; NATO, followed by the Warsaw Pact; our refusal of a proffered arms embargo in the Middle East, followed by all-out Soviet support for the Arabs; and so on.

The whole suicidal buildup of nuclear arsenals has assumed such a pattern, and that is one area where a possible Soviet reaction should now be considered. But Moscow does not lack for other opportunities. Its response might be merely a general hardening of attitude, reflected in the Middle East or the SALT talks and forestalling any neutralization arrangements to halt its great-power naval expansion. It might take the form of a drastic move, say in Berlin or Romania (which country's egg-walking independent actions plus close relations with China may well be regarded now as threatening rather than merely

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menacing). Or it might be a decision to end Soviet restraint on the restive but generally quiescent Communist parties of the world—not excluding Latin America. The new Soviet-Indian accord indicates the diplomatic possibilities. The limbo in which our approach to China has left Japan clearly offers another significant opportunity. In any event, the question is likely to be not whether Moscow will react to the new China policy but how, where and when.

Putting it that way, of course, implies that the Administration really does not intend its approach to China as an anti-Soviet move. But can one be so sure? Even if Mr. Nixon's strong penchant for cold-war concepts did not have a steady anti-Soviet focus, a move to play off China against the USSR would not be alien to the thinking of his chief foreign policy adviser. Dr. Kissinger has written admiringly of how Metternich plotted and planned to play off Czarist Russia against Napoleonic France in just such a fashion. In all probability, the dramatic approach to China sprang from Dr. Kissinger's fertile brain. In the age of Metternich such a gambit as the Austrian Chancellor tried with France and Russia could win applause from the galleries and might even be successful. If it is being used now—in the hope, for example, of pressuring the Soviet Union on Berlin, Germany, the Middle East or SALT—it is almost certain to fail.

If the White House imagines that it can always placate Moscow by drawing back, it may be reckoning without the Chinese, whose long history contains lessons in diplomatic cunning from which even Metternich could have profited. If Mr. Nixon thinks to use the Chinese for whatever he has afoot, what could be more likely than for the Chinese to try to use the Americans for their own ends? In this connection, the reported plans of Chou En-lai to visit the Balkans could be ominous. The first and most unconditional goal of Soviet foreign policy is to maintain a dominant position in Eastern Europe. The earlier willingness of Peking to fish in these troubled waters, evidenced by Chou's visit after the Hungarian revolution, was probably a much more important factor in the Sino-Soviet split than most Western observers have believed. To repeat it now could only be regarded by Moscow as a direct challenge to its most important core interest. And Moscow is sure to read it against the backdrop of the dramatic developments in American-Chinese relations.

It goes without saying that if the Nixon Administration *could* rebuild relations with China and at the same time work out a *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union, this would constitute a diplomatic coup of the first magnitude. But while we may hope for these ends, there is reason to fear that neither will be achieved. It is quite possible that adroit diplomatic footwork and double talk can work out arrangements for the United Nations, and even for Taiwan, acceptable to both Washington and Peking. Whether the Chinese Communists would accept a continued strong American military presence on the Asian mainland—even if the war in Vietnam should somehow be completely Vietnamized—is something else again. All indications are that this consideration is really foremost in Chinese thinking. But unless Mr. Nixon is suddenly prepared to jettison everything he has believed in this regard, maintenance of just such a military presence is

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a "must" in his foreign policy. In such case, the greatly heralded visit to China would be apt to produce little that is positive, and might produce a great deal that is negative, while at the same time damaging our relations with Moscow.

One result of this could be a drastic heating up of the cold war. Could it be possible that certain minds in the Administration, puzzling over how to win an election, would regard this as less than an unmitigated evil? Some might well see it as at least putting them again on familiar territory.

"The acid test of a policy," Dr. Kissinger wrote in his book on Metternich, "is its ability to obtain domestic support," and that, he held, includes "harmonizing it with the national experience." The main American experience in international affairs is the cold war. It takes a devious and conspiratorial turn of mind—like Metternich's—to imagine many of these things. Alas, the minds of many Americans have been forced to take just such a turn.

FRED WARNER NEAL

Thunderclap Politics

In one field of practical wisdom President Nixon cannot be accused of inability to learn. In 1960 he was defeated by a thin margin because, many observers thought, he presented a less attractive image on television than did his opponent. In 1968 he took great pains to look and act his best on the tube. Since taking office, he has relied mainly on television to explain his policies and beef up his failing popularity. The video waves are his whenever he chooses to ask for them, and he chooses often. His performances have been as calculated and crafty as is the general run of TV advertising, but since this level of persuasion is apparently acceptable to the TV audience, Mr. Nixon sees no reason why he should perform on a higher intellectual level. Certainly the technique has its disadvantages, but on the whole it has helped him and by all indications he will continue to use it.

In the last few weeks he has resorted to surprise TV announcements three times, and each time the printed media have flocked after him like the children in the Hamelin legend. This illustrates an inherent advantage of the TV medium. It makes news easy to assimilate (whether rightly or wrongly is not the immediate point) and entertaining. A majority of the audience cares less about the content than about the apparent fact that vigorous action is being taken. Nixon is going to visit China. Nixon is going to cure inflation, unemployment, and all the other malaises of the economy with a single all-inclusive package. Nixon will meet the Emperor Hirohito and his consort in Alaska. Bang, bang, bang!

But the second of these spectaculars is in a class quite different from the other two, and carries a different sort of risk. To a considerable degree, Mr. Nixon can control news generated in the American press by his encounters with the Chinese Communist leaders and with the Emperor of Japan. In the long run, they may prove to be fruitless, or worse; but in the short run—which is the TV sprint to November 4, 1972—they may do the President a lot of good. But the new economic program—a banner raised with such haste that there are great rents in its seams—is something else again. It concerns matters that confront Americans every day: the size of their paychecks, the price they pay for dinner, their ability to meet the mortgage payment. They are not dependent on White House press handouts for news in that area; they get the word quickly, directly and with considerable force. Nor is the new program likely to unite the nation behind the President. Everyone, presumably, approves of the idea that Nixon and Mao will sip tea together, but people are variously bruised by various aspects of the great economic cure-all.

It is hard to see, thus, why the conferees at Camp David were in a buoyant mood after their deliberations and found it possible to dine in a spirit of self-congratulation. They had grabbed the headlines, but in ninety days, if not sooner, they would have to show results—the beginnings, at least, of solutions to problems that may prove intractable. For one thing, the several solutions may contradict one another, and what is gained in one phase may be lost in another.

The first obstacles were easily overcome. Gov. Preston Smith of Texas, who had issued a proclamation defying the wage freeze, was advised by his attorney general that the President's order was valid. The Pentagon announced that military pay hikes were exempt from the wage freeze; Secretary Connally overrode the generals. But George Meany's truculent opposition carries more of a threat. He, and other labor leaders, are on solid ground when they protest that whenever this President, or any American President, calls for sacrifice, he is talking to labor, not to capital. Strikes against the Presidential package may not be popular, but unpopular strikes have often been successful, and Mr. Nixon's prescription is full of holes in this and other respects.

To the foreigners affected by the *de facto* devaluation of the dollar, and by the 10 per cent surcharge on imports, the Presidential fiats have brutal implications. They may not find it prudent to retaliate, but most of them wish they could. Economic agreements dating back to World War II have in effect been unilaterally abrogated. Cutting the dollar loose from gold is not as radical a step as it seems. For the past several years the dollar has not been convertible into gold by foreign holders. Fort Knox would have run out of gold while legitimate claimants were still standing on line. Mr. Nixon did nothing but formally recognize a reality. The 10 per cent surcharge was less excusable. It was aimed directly at foreign exporters, especially the Japanese, who are able to undersell the United States in its own domestic markets. Some powerful American financial interests, those represented by *Fortune,* for instance, consider this an ill-advised move.

No one can predict at this point what the ultimate results of the Nixon bombshell will be. He has jettisoned some of his own dearly cherished economic articles of faith. Although the wage-price freeze is ostensibly voluntary, the federal government is up to its neck in economic regulation. Nobody expects it to keep its hands off after ninety days.

The American stock market reaction was panic in reverse. When stocks go up as a result of frenzied buying by uninformed "investors," the same psychology can bring on a downward plunge.

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What it comes down to, then, is that TV sneak previews are splendid for grandiose gestures. Mr. Nixon may, if he wish, announce that he will visit the moon in company with Golda Meir and Chiang Kai-shek, and then hasten to San Clemente to await the gurglings of the press. But when he has something real up his sleeve, some new about-face that will immediately affect men and women by the millions in every quarter of the globe, he should prepare the ground in advance, state the argument in detail and stick around to participate in the debate. A half hour appropriated from the networks' prime time is not the time or place to deal with bread and butter. It is fit only for political sizzle.

Saigon Shambles

It must be said for Ellsworth Bunker that he knew exactly what his job in Saigon was. He was not there to promote American-style democracy: everybody in the State Department, right down to the charwomen, knew that that was impossible; nor would a succession of American Presidents have been interested in the performance of such a near miracle. Mr. Bunker's task was the more modest one of keeping President Thieu in office by hook or crook, but making it appear that the people of South Vietnam had chosen him to be their leader in the progressive destruction of their country for another four years. Or at least to make this election look less palpably rigged than the previous one.

The project has turned out a complete and abject failure. "I can only repeat," the unhappy State Department spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey, told the reporters, "that our interest was and is in seeing an honest and contested election." Out of respect for a bureaucrat so sorely tried, no one laughed. Privately, a State Department specialist in the manipulation of Vietnamese politics told the same reporters, "The whole thing is a shambles." In a July 14th editorial, "Vietnamization and October 3rd," *The Nation* predicted precisely what would happen. No prescience was required.

The last thing the Nixon Administration wanted was a fair election in which Gen. Duong Van Minh ("Big Minh") might come out ahead. Big Minh is far from being a Communist, but he is remembered as the leader of the coup that overthrew the tyrannical Ngo Dinh Diem, and Hanoi and the Vietcong might be willing to negotiate with him. Nixon does not want negotiations. Except perhaps in dire extremity, what he wants is a semblance of victory via Vietnamization. When Big Minh withdrew from the race, with comments about a "farcical" election that were echoed by the Hanoi radio, Washington expressed relief. At that time, however, it still seemed likely that Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky could be retained as a stand-in candidate by Thieu's change of orders to the Supreme Court which, with the provincial chiefs and the rest of the bureaucracy, he keeps in his pocket. The volatile Ky, however, though technically on the ballot, refuses to campaign and continues to denounce Thieu's blatant rigging of what Thieu and Bunker persist in calling an election.

In his press conference, McCloskey took the unusual step of denying the possibility of a military coup in Saigon before the reporters could question him about it. He explained that orders keeping American troops off the streets were a precaution against anti-American demonstrations by dissident elements during the weekend elections for seats in the lower house. According to Tad Szulc (*The New York Times,* August 25), the real fear at the State Department is a buildup of tensions over Thieu's uncontested candidacy. McCloskey acknowledged that the dissident elements might not be "necessarily exclusively Communists," but rather Vietnamese who were growing increasingly restive over the protracted American presence in their country.

This suggests another possible Indochinese headache for President Nixon. His excuse for covert escalation of the war, or at least winding it down at a snail's pace, has been his solicitude for the safety of our troops. The implication has been that they were in danger from North Vietnamese and Vietcong battalions. But a side effect of Vietnamization might well be overt hostility toward Americans on the part of non-Communist South Vietnamese. Thieu (and Ky also) have repeatedly expressed their unalterable opposition to a coalition government. They will never permit the formation of such an alliance, and in this stand they have had the full support of Ambassador Bunker and President Nixon. But such a coalition might be formed without American concurrence. It may be only a theoretical possibility, but it is one that the great minds in the State Department and the various White Houses must view with increasing apprehension.

Stormont and Saigon

The surgery of partition is at best a crude way to deal with political problems—a last desperate remedy in default of genuine solutions: witness Pakistan-India, Korea, Vietnam, Berlin and Germany. The granddaddy of partitioned monstrosities is, of course, Ireland. Not knowing what else to do, the British in 1920 carved out in Northern Ireland a vestpocket "state" which was intended as a timeless sinecure for the Tory-inclined "landed gentry" and other Protestants. It has produced nothing but social and economic stagnation and ever increasing violence and disregard for the civil rights of Catholics.

The plain fact is that Northern Ireland is no more a sovereign state than is South Vietnam. Stormont—the governing body of Northern Ireland—is a British invention. Westminster could blow the whistle whenever it wished and this bizarre structure would collapse. It is not a government because it does not represent those it is supposed to govern. As long as the British Army backs them up, the Protestants (more accurately the Orange Order) will never acknowledge that Catholics have equal rights—any more than Saigon, as long as it has Washington on the hook, will admit all elements in South Vietnam to participate equally and freely in the governance of that sad province. Thieu and Faulkner are both puppets—troublesome, truculent, arrogant and stubborn, but still puppets. The ghastly record of disorder in Northern Ireland should be a warning to Washington of what to expect if it continues to prop up the Thieu regime, underwriting it with money, arms and ultimately American military power, as the British have long underwritten the farcical Stormont regime.

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Balance Sheet on Justice

When President Brewster of Yale voiced a reserved doubt that a Black Panther could obtain justice under the American judicial system, he aroused the ire of many alumni and was proved to be at least partially mistaken. Last spring a New York jury took just three hours to clear thirteen Panthers of conspiracy, after a trial that lasted eight months. The jury was unanimous and took part in an impromptu celebration with the acquitted defendants. After a jury was unable to reach agreement in the murder trial of Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins, a Connecticut judge suspended further proceedings against the two. In California, Huey Newton is to receive a new trial on the charge of killing an Oakland policeman. In all these cases there were unconscionable delays, but eventually justice, or something approaching it, was done.

It is too early to draw conclusions in the case of George Jackson, shot by a guard in an alleged attempt at a prison break at San Quentin. Five other men, including three guards, were slain. Jackson had every reason to stand trial in the hope of acquittal. It seems strange that he was attempting to shoot his way out of San Quentin, or to lead a prison break against odds he well understood.

Another case in which the judicial process comes out ahead—though again after long delay and uncertain future prospects—is the announcement that State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan has been indicted on a charge of conspiring to prevent the prosecution of eight Chicago policemen who killed Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in a pre-dawn raid in 1969. A federal grand jury, although critical of the actions of Hanrahan and the police, returned no indictments. A special Cook County grand jury returned indictments in April of this year, but the presiding judge, Joseph A. Power, refused to accept them until ordered to do so on August 24 by the Illinois Supreme Court.

If the judge's reluctance had all the earmarks of bias, the action of Attorney General Mitchell in refusing to impanel a federal jury to investigate the killings at Kent State University on May 4, 1970 is even more atrocious. Mitchell concurs in the finding of the Scranton Commission that the deaths were "unnecessary, unwarranted and inexcusable," but he finds no evidence of a conspiracy on the part of the National Guardsmen who fired the fatal shots and wounded nine other students. The South Carolina shootings of 1968, and at Jackson State in 1970, were equally horrible, but the killings at Kent State occurred in broad daylight, in the presence of hundreds of witnesses, and there is every indication that a group of Guardsmen fired on signal, with intent to kill, thus venting their wrath on the students, some of whom had nothing to do with the demonstration. Even if the Attorney General believed that convictions could not be obtained, the American public—and the Guardsmen—were entitled to a test of the truth in open court. Mr. Mitchell has constituted himself the prosecutor, judge and jury in this case. As the study by Peter Davies and the Christian Social Concerns of the United Methodist Church has concluded, Kent State is America's My Lai in Ohio—and Attorney General Mitchell has, in effect, made himself an accomplice after the fact.

UNUSUALLY CHILLY FOR LABOR DAY 1971: Labor's Rough Year

B. J. WIDICK
Mr. Widick is the author of Detroit: A Study in Race and Class Violence (*Quadrangle Press*) *and* Labor Today: The Triumphs and Failure of Unionism in the United States *(Houghton Mifflin). He teaches at Columbia University.*

As they prepared their speeches for Labor Day 1971, American trade union leaders were still recovering from the shock therapy administered to them by the ninety-day wage-price freeze in President Nixon's new economic program. Cries of outrage from most union leaders were being replaced by a sense of dismay, and a realization of hard times ahead. Was it only a year ago that George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, urged his colleagues to join him in wining and dining at the White House with Richard Nixon? What happened to the illusions?

The confusion into which current collective bargainings and strikes were thrown by the President's speech of August 15 was not an accidental by-product of the Nixon policies. It was part of the game plan, calculated to impose a heavy restraint on labor's wage push, and to support management's backbone at least for ninety days. The more than 200,000 workers on strike were under immediate pressure. Another 900,000 unionists whose bargaining teams were about to begin negotiations were next in line. Public sector unions, teachers, firemen, et al., were also major targets.

By mounting a massive campaign, labor may undo the effects of the current freeze; a skeleton organization for a wage-price review board of undetermined power has already been set up in Washington for operation after the current freeze. The strategy will be to make labor rewin in the remainder of 1971 what it has already "won." Recognition of this new Nixon plan accounts for the belligerent statement from Leonard Woodcock, president of the United Auto Workers: "If this administration thinks that just by issuing an edict, by the stroke of a pen, they can tear up contracts, they are saying to us they want war. If they want war, they can have war."

On November 22, UAW members are due another

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raise and in December they expect a cost of living raise under contracts signed last year. Victory for the UAW might consist of no more than keeping those provisions intact. Considering the bonus the auto industry is itself to receive in the 10 per cent surcharge on imports and the proposed elimination of the 7 per cent excise tax on cars, the industry can easily afford to pay its contract obligations. By way of precedent, during the Korean War, the auto industry argued before the wage-stabilization board that the UAW should get its contracted raises. The UAW and the industry won that point.

Part of the new strategy is to cool off the rank and file. The situation of the recalcitrant New York locals of the Communications Workers of America, still on strike after the national agreement has been ratified by a large majority, is a good example of what may happen. After the wage freeze, the militant strike leaders were denying that they had "goofed" by failing to ratify the nationwide contract.

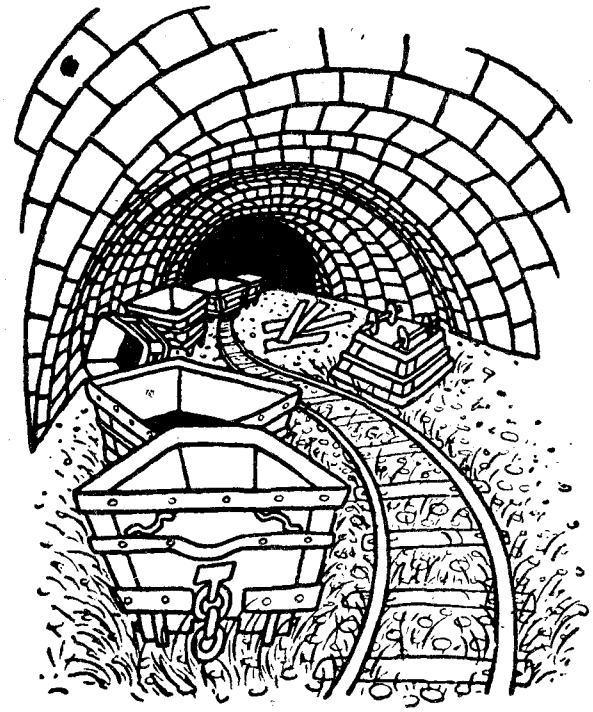
On the West Coast the longshoremen are on strike, and a strike is threatened on the East Coast. Most of the leaders in those unions missed the implication of a very important pronouncement by George Shultz, Nixon's domestic manager. Shultz derided the statistics in a report made by Arthur M. Okun, one-time Council of Economic Advisors member, whereby the Johnson administration obtained an eighty-day injunction under the Taft-Hartley law against a longshoremen's strike. And it is true that long strikes have a cooling effect on the ranks.

One aspect of Nixon's new economic policy should gratify the AFL-CIO. The 10 per cent surcharge on imports is right in line with its demand for protectionism, as Nixon's emissaries can be expected to remind the union movement in the days ahead. The possibility of extending the import tax beyond the ninety days is a valuable bargaining point for the Administration.

Another part of the shock to the labor leaders was the curt dismissal of George Meany's complaint about the wage-price edict. Said Secretary of Labor James D. Hodgson: "Mr. Meany appears to be sadly out of step with the needs and desires of American workingmen and women." Meany had, after all, suggested a wage-price board. An AFL-CIO spokesman made an interesting reply to Hodgson: "Far from being out of step with the rank and file, Meany is doing a lot to hold them back. There are a lot of angry people out there. We've been deluged with telegrams against the plan. Some even want a general strike."

In the ninety-day freeze period, public and private negotiations between top union leaders and the Administration will concentrate on the creation and the policies of a tripartite wage-price board. Giving labor its place on some form of "watchdog" or review committee would go a long way toward assuaging current animosities.

But any "incomes policy" raises all the basic questions that a ninety-day freeze postpones: what effect will dollar revaluation have on domestic and world economic fronts? How does America become more "competitive," when unit labor costs are rising faster here than in other nations? What, if any, effect, short or long term, will these policies have on unemployment? Should overtime be allowed (14 million workers are earning overtime in a



Brandel

period of high unemployment)? No one seems less prepared to deal with these complex questions than a union leadership lost in traditional ways of bargaining, and unwilling to broaden its economic or social values. These are some of the new dimensions of problems facing an already shaken union hierarchy.

Even before August, the year 1971, like 1970 before it, had been tough for labor. The following review of major events in bargaining and union developments indicates just how rough the going has been.

During the year, discontents exploded in a series of strikes and collective bargaining crises which neither union leaders nor management executives could contain without making contract settlements that subverted the Administration's economic game plan, accelerated inflation, added to the unemployment problem, and intensified the disturbing challenge of foreign competition in both American and world markets.

In this context, 1971 was a time of chagrin and anxiety for many unions and their members. At best, unions won Pyrrhic victories. In all cases, they approach the last quarter of the year plagued by more rather than fewer problems. Signs of economic fragmentation, neo-isolationism and disorientation are evident as the unions are buffeted by internal convulsions and external pressures.

The outlook is particularly uncertain for unions in industries that face foreign competition, or are dominated by multinational corporations: shoes, textiles, electric equipment, autos and steel. So-called victories at the bargaining table appear only to hasten the loss of jobs and other painful readjustments. A vivid illustration is the recent "victory" in steel. While union leaders cheered the announcement of a contract settlement without a strike, the ranks were stunned to find that plants remained closed, or that layoff notices continued to appear. Steel production had begun to decline before the August strike

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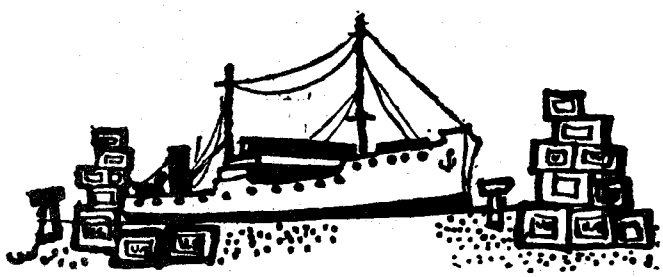
because of huge stockpiles, and given the forthcoming drive for higher man-hour productivity, many of the unemployed are unlikely ever to return to the mills.

For the industry, as R. Heath Larry, its chief negotiator declared, the settlement was "inflationary," which meant steel would announce higher prices—in fact, it raised them about 8 per cent, on top of an early 1971 rise of more than 6 per cent. How can American companies compete in any market with that kind of pricing policy? The departing member of the Council of Economic Advisors, Hendrik S. Houthakker, warned recently in a special report to President Nixon that, "There is a general agreement that the price advantage of imported steel has been its major attraction to U.S. purchasers." Steel imports rose from 3 million tons in 1961 to a peak of 18 million tons in 1968; they declined to 13 million tons in 1970, as the result of a voluntary restraint arrangement by Japanese and other foreign producers.

Two national trade union conferences on foreign trade and much union literature have sounded the alarm on the threat to American jobs from "cheap foreign labor." They chime in with the protectionist segments of American industry, lobbying in Washington for legislation to meet foreign competition. What happens to steel in the coming months may be an omen for other industries.

The pattern of "gains" whereby major unions get contracts providing for wage increases of about 30 per cent over a three-year period, and with the inclusion of the once despised "cost of living" escalator clauses, must be analyzed in the context of recent economic trends. Before Mr. Nixon stepped in—at least for ninety days—the prospect of higher wages, higher prices, bigger government deficits, more inflation and more persistent unemployment haunted economists, political and labor leaders. Even such political adversaries as Arthur F. Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and George Meany agree on that analysis, and both had urged some form of "incomes policy"—wage and price restraints or control. Both knew that each wage increase brought a price increase, and that the merry-go-round would continue, with general inflation pricing more and more American products out of world markets.

Union leaders, however, operate mainly over the short run, and in the steel negotiations, union president I. W. Abel performed with a skill reminiscent of the late Walter Reuther. The earlier aluminum, can and copper settlements, after short strikes, had indicated that yearly wage increases of about 10 per cent, comparable to many building trades settlements, was an achievable goal for steel. If the industry could see some prospect of higher productivity, acquiescence for price increases and assistance in curbing foreign imports, the basis for a peaceful settlement was obvious. At the recent AFL-CIO conference on jobs, Abel delivered the expected blast at foreign imports—not a small assist to steel's lobbying for protectionism. In negotiations, the Human Relations Committee (the widely heralded innovation of ten years ago) was dropped for the creation of productivity committees, which must surely hearten plant executives. As for the White House, a meeting of the negotiators with President Nixon brought a plea for a "constructive" settlement, and who could be against that? No wonder *The New York Times,* before the settlement, denounced the whole process as an economic charade.



Between the stockpiles, the early layoffs, and the strong possibility of a 30 per cent package without a strike, the steelworkers were cooled off. Furthermore, an important result of the nine-week General Motors strike registered on the steel union's leaders and ranks. The UAW ran into a situation most unionists want to avoid—it spent $176 million to get the 30 per cent wage package, and went broke in the process. It had to borrow $10 million from the Steel union, $1 million from the Rubberworkers, and $25 million from the Teamsters, the UAW's partner in the Alliance for Labor Action. The Teamsters charged 8 per cent interest, taking over the title of the UAW's headquarters and its Black Lake educational center for security. General Motors has just loaned the UAW $30 million more by paying the strikers' Blue Cross and Blue Shield bill, apparently without security. The UAW is retrenching. It has quit paying its obligation to the ALA, which is now defunct, and is not in a position to play much of a role at home or abroad.

In addition to the sobering effect of this debacle, known to all Steel union activists, president Abel kept peace within his union by involving 600 local union presidents in the negotiations. As a result, most of these leaders supported the new contract, even though some vital issues remained unresolved, and the future is not rosy.

Within a few days after the settlement, local union leaders were being quoted in *The Wall Street Journal* as agreeing with its estimate of the long-range consequences of the contract:

> The closedown of some old mills and a phasing out of the least-profitable product lines, resulting in increased efficiency for companies.
>
> A spate of steel company mergers, especially if the government approves a pending consolidation of National Steel Corp. and Granite City Steel Co.
>
> More serious consideration of establishing steel mills in nations where wages are low in an effort to meet competition from foreign steelmakers.
>
> A long-term reduction, stemming from all these moves, in the industry's employment and thus in the ranks of the Steelworkers union. "You are going to see one hell of a reduction in manpower over a period of time," predicts one man in the industry.

Nevertheless, Abel is riding high in union circles as a leader who delivered the goods, and kept most of his union under control.

In the railroad industry the outcome of the recent strike settlement was similar to that in steel, with some important nuances. Like every other railroad crisis since World War II, the current dispute was essentially a rear-

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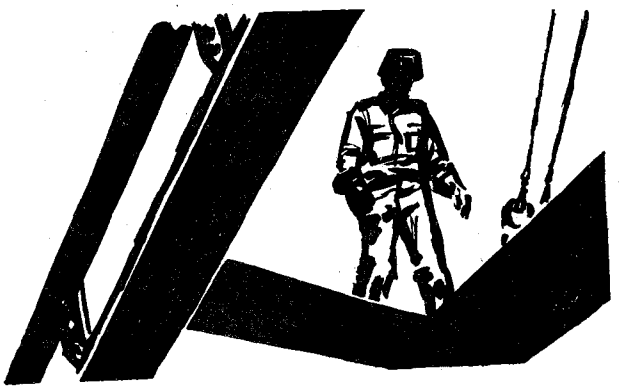


guard action of the unions to postpone an inevitable loss of manpower. From about 1.6 million persons employed in the industry (during that war), the figure is down to about 500,000. According to management, the new contract enables them to eliminate another 25,000 to 30,000 jobs. The drop in employment has been due to the decline in passenger business, the increase of automation, the diesel locomotive replacing the steam engine (saving maintenance costs and permitting larger loads per engine). But wages are still based essentially on the old work rules and standards.

However, this time an ingenious decision by a federal court, upheld by the Supreme Court, created the atmosphere for more normal collective bargaining. The Court ruled that the United Transportation Union (a combination of merged railway unions) could call selective strikes; and the union, directed by its president, Charles Luna, did call walkouts which lasted eighteen days. But the Court also ruled that the railroad carriers had the right unilaterally to change restrictive work rules in retaliation against the selective strikes. The carriers did that, causing thousands of layoffs and pay losses for the workers.

The UTU won a guarantee that each union member whose job is lost through changes in the work rules gets one year's severance pay, or continued employment, for each year of seniority. The wage package of 42 per cent for forty-two months was expected to bring increased rates, for which the railroads have already petitioned. How much freight was lost permanently to the trucking industry during the walkout has not yet been revealed.

Joseph Beirne, president of the Communications Workers of America, was less fortunate than Abel or Luna. The telephone workers' strike, which Beirne ordered ended after he accepted an agreement, turned into a rank-and-file revolt, led by twenty-two local presidents in the New York area. Among other things, the union's campaign to eliminate discriminatory wage practices against women has boomeranged on the leadership.

CWA had charged that AT&T's policy discriminated against women to the extent that female craft employees averaged about 62 per cent of the wages received by top male crafts. The new agreement narrows that range by only three percentage points. In a union whose 400,000 members are 55 per cent female, that hasn't been well received, as the pickets in New York keep pointing out.

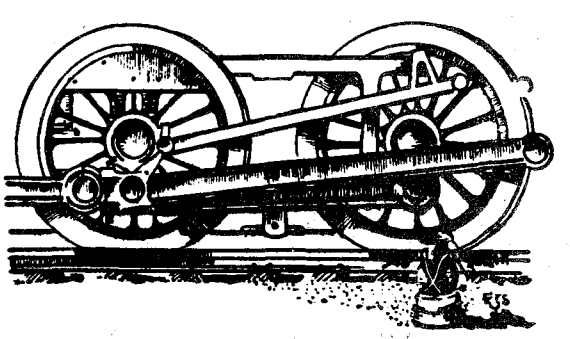
Nor are the male craftsmen satisfied with the new contract. A leaflet put out by one of the striking locals alleges that skilled persons outside the Bell System receive roughly $3 an hour more than the CWA has obtained for its members. Even when the union membership ratifies the national agreement, and one way or another the rebellious locals are forced to return to work, rank-and-file dissatisfaction will continue to fester within the union. As a matter of fact, Bell wages and working conditions are so poor as compared to other industries that in 1969, for example, out of 125,000 employees hired only 15,000 remained by the end of the year. The cost to the company of this rapid turnover is enormous. Nothing in the new CWA contract assures improvement in these basic personnel problems. The most significant gain made by CWA was provided in a clause whereby non-union members must pay to the union a fee equivalent to dues.

With more than one-third of the nation's work force now female, and with discrimination illegal under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, both management and unions face a tangle of legal and internal problems over the sex issue. The Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is trying to block a $385 million rate increase request by AT&T, on the ground that the corporation discriminates against women. That may spark more actions.

Perhaps the greatest irony of the 1971 labor scene is that the union once considered the pariah of American labor is the one union with something to celebrate. The Teamsters, about 2 million strong, are being wooed by the AFL-CIO, the Nixon Administration and Democratic politicians. Two of George Meany's associates, Joseph Keenan of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and Pete Bommarito, of the Rubberworkers union, spoke at the recent Teamsters convention, where Frank Fitzsimmons, lifetime friend and associate of Jimmy Hoffa, was elected to a five-year term as president.

Many of the labor leaders and politicians who denounced Walter Reuther and the UAW for working with the Teamsters are now busy flattering the same organization. President Nixon met recently with the Teamsters' executive board, and Secretary of Labor James D. Hodgson spoke at the truckdrivers' convention. Fitzsimmons doesn't need George Meany's help to get into the White House, and it's improbable that the Teamsters will rejoin the AFL-CIO and present Meany with about $2 million a year in dues.

As befits a successful business union, the Teamsters voted their former president pension rights estimated at $1.7 million. His wife and son are still active in the union, but of Hoffa only the legend remains. Any parole usually includes a limitation on activity, and in any case



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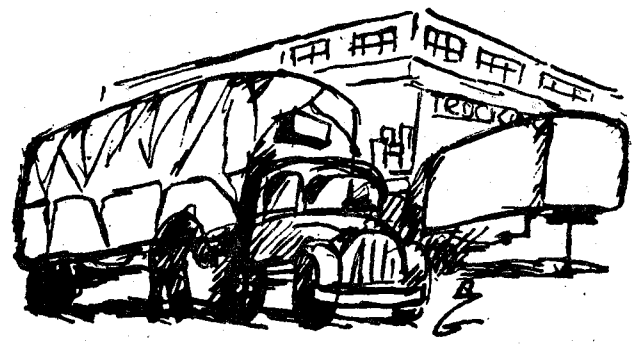
their newly shared power is not something the Teamster leaders have any reason to surrender to anyone. Candidly, who needs Jimmy Hoffa? Fitzsimmons' ascent to power—and the convention mandate that gives him control of huge political funds is real power—reminds one of what happened when John L. Lewis stepped down as president of the CIO and placed his most loyal lieutenant and devoted friend in power. Phillip Murray lost little time in becoming his own man, and Fitzsimmons' skills of leadership have clearly been underestimated.

Bringing up the name of John L. Lewis recalls the fortune of his union, the United Mine Workers. Surely the saddest story in the labor movement of recent years has been the degeneration of this once proud flagship of industrial unionism. It is not only that the union has declined from a membership of more than 400,000 to around 100,000 and that the poverty of Appalachia is partly the result of industry-union policies. The handpicked successor of John L. Lewis, W. A. "Tony" Boyle, is under criminal indictment for misuse of union funds, and the coal miners' affairs had been so conducted, the atmosphere of the union had so degenerated, that Joseph Yablonski, the opposition candidate, was murdered, along with his wife and daughter. Only one important labor leader, the late Walter Reuther, spoke out in anger against this horror. The brutal contest for the presidency, in which more than 100 charges of fraud, intimidation and violence were filed against the Boyle faction, was ignored by the Labor Department, and dismissed by George Meany with the cynical remark: "It was just that one of the boys from the kitchen is trying to move into the living room."

William V. Shannon's article in *The New York Times* which stated, "To his lasting discredit, Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz ignored these alarm signals," misses a larger guilt—the government's seven-year delay in acting against the UMW hierarchy for violating provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act on union elections. At present, seven districts of the union are still under trusteeship, some of them going back to 1916. Previous Secretaries of Labor under Democratic Presidents have some public explaining to do. The contrast between the treatment given Jimmy Hoffa and Tony Boyle is a measure of the moral and political cynicism in labor-political circles.

The fresh air in the American labor movement has come this year from the spectacular growth of public sector unionism—a new force in American society which is just finding itself, and learning its real problems. White-collar unionism in the United States now covers about 3 million members, more than 40 per cent of them in government service. The Postal and the State, County and Municipal Employees unions are permanent institutions, with large memberships. The American Federation of Teachers has 250,000 members, and its rival, the National Education Association (a non-union union), numbers more than a million and reports that it now conducts more strikes than does the AFT.

It is not surprising that the white-collar unions, along with unions embodying large black minorities, respond more keenly to social problems than do the building trades who are Meany's power base. On the war issue Jerry Wurf, of the State, County and Municipal Employees has



been as eloquent as Leonard Woodcock of the UAW. They know—in terms of inflation, distorted priorities and alienation of youth—the cost of the pro-war policies supported by Meany's people. The tax squeeze on municipalities has set limits to the gains of public sector unions. The new postal contract allows the elimination of 40,000 workers, mainly black. A glut of more than 100,000 teachers annually chokes the educational market. Unionism as usual is a poor answer to these growing problems.

The 2-to-3 million blacks in trade unions are frequently pointed to as proof of integration. In reality, within the union movement the issue is still complex and difficult. Black union power is growing; many local unions in both the public and private sector are governed by black leaders, backed by black majorities. But race, rather than class or union consciousness, dominates, as we learned in recent tours of the Midwest. Black and white workers at best tolerate one another. Black unionists everywhere are learning the hard way how to take over. The organizational skill of white leaders may postpone the growth of black unionism, but not for long.

A classic case of the gap between the membership and its leadership is the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Behind its imposing façade of financial strength and contractual relations is the shell of a union.

In the good old days—to which senior union officers frequently refer—the shrewd leadership of David Dubinsky molded two minorities, the Italian and the Jewish workers, into an effective economic and political force. At the recent ILGWU convention a tired old man, Louis Stulberg, insisted not just in retaining his presidency but also the power of the secretary-treasurer. He added three more whites to the executive board of a union whose Puerto Rican and black membership has replaced the other ethnic groups without gaining a share of power or leadership.

The building trades, like other unions, have severe problems. At the recent AFL-CIO conference on jobs, Meany reported that unemployment among construction workers was above 10 per cent. New contracts mean little to these workers. As for the whole issue of discrimination against blacks, the matter is no longer a subject of debate between Bayard Rustin of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and Herbert Hill, labor secretary of the NAACP. The voluntary "Chicago plan" turned out to be as big a bust as the controversial Philadelphia plan sponsored by the Administration. In all cases, federal courts, under prodding of the NAACP, are intervening, and the unions and employers appear to be on the losing side. Nor has any serious dent been made in the two-entry system, whereby in the building trades most whites become jour-

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neymen without going through formal apprentice programs, while almost all blacks must take the slow route.

Social fragmentation within unions has its economic counterpart. Unions worried about jobs get the AFL-CIO to endorse the building of the SST. Bailing out Lockheed becomes a matter of concern for the Machinists' union. Other unions with other roots in other parts of the industry lobby from the opposite tack. In foreign trade, a similar division is developing. Unions whose jobs depend on exports fear the prospects of a trade war. A University of Wisconsin study shows that, in any trade war involving Japan and Europe, American labor would lose six high-paying jobs for every seven low-paying jobs it saved by "Protectionism." Writing in the August issue of *Fortune*, Sanford Rose points out:

> Many businessmen and labor leaders believe import restrictions would help low pay textile workers or New England shoemakers. But if we place restrictions on textiles and shoes, Europe and Japan would obviously retaliate. And retaliation would certainly reduce income of, for example, Mississippi soybean farmers, who are big exporters to Europe and Asia. It would also seriously hurt the coal miner. U.S. exports of coal to Japan have risen from $77 million in 1966 to $412 million in 1970. And it would produce considerable distress among the farmers in the State of Washington, about 75 per cent of whose wheat output is exported to Asia, principally to Japan. The union leaders had considerable opportunity to learn in the 1930s that trade wars don't cure unemployment, they worsen it.

By focusing on the narrow issue of wage costs—cheap foreign labor, it says, is making us unable to compete—and telling horror stories about paychecks in Hong Kong and Taiwan, the AFL-CIO ignores account management failures, pricing policies and other factors which help explain why some American industries aren't competitive. Steel is a classic example of management failures.

Neo-isolationism has diminished American labor's already fading voice abroad. The AFL-CIO has less influence overseas today than at any time since World War II. Its support of the disastrous Vietnamese War, its rigid cold-war stance, and its withdrawal from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions helped to isolate it. The stupid blocking of funds for the International Labor Organization by a Congressman under the sway of the AFL-CIO has been a scandal for two years, and has done the image of George Meany little good anywhere. The issue in dispute was the appointment of a Russian to one of five posts in the ILO. And the polls have shown time and again that Meany does not represent the ranks when he calls for unconditional support of the war. Walter Reuther more accurately reflected the views of the men and women of labor.

By encouraging the old war horse, Sen. Henry Jackson, to bid for the Democratic Presidential nomination, Meany suggests that the AFL-CIO will remain in the right wing of the party when it comes to foreign policy. At a time when young voters are registering by the thousands, mainly as Democrats, Meany's vitriolic attacks on the peace movement and the youth of America who resisted the war will return to haunt the AFL-CIO.

Given the complex of social problems, the changing character of our work force and general population and the rising educational level of the country, the unionism as usual operations of George Meany and his colleagues seem as stale as did the activities of William Green and his craft unionist leaders of the AFL in the turbulent days of the great depression. Changes in policy, the rise of fresh leaders and new ideas, enabled labor in the 1930s to overcome the resistance of its management opponents and the moribund grip of the AFL hierarchy over the labor movement. Until something like that occurs in the 1970s, trade unions will be belabored and beleaguered. The movement has lost much of the respect the general public gave it, and that management conceded it deserved.

Collective bargaining is institutionalized; unions are a permanent part of American society. They will survive and in some cases grow, in membership and financial strength. But they remain woefully inadequate as problem solvers. Living on self-praise or past glories may be comforting, but it is self-deceiving and self-destructive. □

Union and Campus: Talking Together

JAMES HIGGINS
Mr. Higgins, formerly an editor of the York Gazette and Daily, *is now a staff contributor to* The Nation.

One of the features of the 102-day strike of fourteen unions against General Electric in the fall of 1969, the most significant struggle of U.S. organized labor since 1946, was the participation of students and young faculty members in the strike campaign. Union representatives, mostly from UE (United Electrical Workers) and IUE (the International Union of Electrical Workers), addressed audiences at colleges and universities. Students and professors carried on resistance movements against the presence of GE recruiters on campuses. Young men and women, some in schools, some graduated or dropped out, walked picket lines, distributed leaflets, assisted in community support efforts, urged public boycott of GE products. "Actually," says one union officer, "the thing was reminiscent not so much of 1946 as of the thirties during the mass struggles to organize the CIO in basic industry."

No one, apparently, considered then how the emergency relationship, which, for the first time, in a large way, had connected the New Left with organized labor, might be continued. But some months later, George Wald, Harvard biologist and winner of the Nobel Prize, read a newspaper account of a speech by Victor Reuther of the United Auto Workers, which with the Teamsters in their recently formed independent Alliance for Labor Action, had been among the unions cooperating in the GE strike. Speaking

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at a conference on environmental problems at a UAW center in Michigan, Reuther had said:

> There are people in this country who are trying to divide the workers from the students. It is as cold and calculated a strategy as the Southern Strategy, but there are no two groups that have more in common than working people and students.

Wald himself had been thinking generally along the same lines at least since March of 1969. Early in that month, at an academic gathering called at M.I.T. to protest the misuse of science by the military-industrial complex, he had remarked that "a whole generation of students is beset with a profound uneasiness." He went on to say that he thought he knew what was bothering the students. "I think," he said, "that what we are up against is a generation that is by no means sure that it has a future." And he added:

> Are we to have a chance to live? We don't ask for prosperity or security; only for a reasonable chance to live, to work out our destiny in peace and decency. Not to go down in history as the apocalyptic generation.

A reporter and an editorial writer from the *Boston Globe*, who had heard Wald speak, returned to their office and independently of each other told an editor, "I think I've just listened to the most important speech of my life." National, even international reaction, was much the same, but as Wald was to discover, speeches are one thing and effective work on the basis of a speech is another. Especially when the speechmaker is a man recently emerged from the relative isolation of laboratory research and classroom teaching into the public arena. It became increasingly clear to Wald that the academic community itself was isolated, that the progressive element in that community had no constituency, that they were thus vulnerable to slanders from "know-nothings" in high places of the government-corporate-mass media Establishment.

One result of the M.I.T. speech, however, was that the UE invited Wald to address its convention in the fall of 1969—which, as it turned out, was held almost on the eve of the GE strike. Here Wald learned somewhat of labor's embattled history and present situation. He learned of the efforts under way to develop, especially between the traditionally bitter rival unions, UE and IUE, an unprecedented united front for negotiations with GE. But he also learned two other important facts: that, as a delegate said, members of a labor union had been talking for some time about exactly the subjects he had been discussing from the platform, about "military control, about our democracy, and how to preserve it"; and that a representative from the academic community and representatives of organized labor could converse easily and usefully with one another.

So when Wald came upon the quoted remarks of Victor Reuther about a year ago, he dropped a note of appreciation to the labor leader and another note to UAW president Leonard Woodcock, suggesting that one way to counter the strategy aimed at dividing students from workers, intellectuals from labor unions, would be for university professors such as himself, and labor leaders such as Woodcock, to start something going. Woodcock was receptive. In their correspondence lies the origins of an alliance, still in process of development and still facing many problems, which was first explored at a series of meetings last fall at Harvard's Faculty Club and was formally organized in February. It is worth recording the names of those on hand at the February session, which signalized, in Wald's words, "the first time in this nation's history that these three constituencies (labor, faculty, students) have formed an alliance.

From labor: Woodcock; Harold Gibbons, Teamsters international vice president; Howard D. Samuel, assistant to the president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, (AFL-CIO); James Matles, UE international secretary-treasurer; John Hein, assistant to the president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFL-CIO); Cleveland Robinson, president of the Distributive Workers of America; Abe Feinglass, assistant to the president, Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workers.

From faculties: Wald; Noam Chomsky, M.I.T.; Franz Schurmann, University of California at Berkeley; Seymour Melman, Columbia; Richard Barnet, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.; Sidney Peck, Western Reserve, Cleveland.

Students: David Ifshin, president, National Student Association; Frank Greer, University of Maryland; John Rodriguez, University of Texas; Ron Eachus, University of Oregon; Charles Schumer, Harvard; Steve Tiwald, University of Nebraska; William Shamblin, University of West Virginia.

This list, it should be said, does not include some who attended earlier meetings or who have expressed cordial interest, among whom are representatives from the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the Federation of Teachers, the United Steelworkers, the United Farm Workers, as well as faculty members and students from a dozen or so other colleges and universities. If growth goes as planned, and area locals are organized in about fifteen regions throughout the country, the alliance may indeed attain the historic significance which Wald and others attribute to its formation. It seems unlikely that it can become politically impressive by 1972, but by 1976 it could be potent. Much depends upon the organizational funding, to which seven unions—Wald hopes for at least ten—have already subscribed. But much also depends upon the spontaneous initiative of concerned people in particular places. The shape and objectives of things expected to come elsewhere are being prefigured in the present preparatory work of the Massachusetts Labor-University-Community Advisory Council established early in June.

The structure of the top-level board of this council, as agreed by those attending an initial meeting at Northeastern University in Boston, will include as many as possible of the highest ranking union officers in the state. Already committed are the UAW, UE, IUE, Meat Cutters, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Teachers, and State, County and Municipal Employees. The Teamsters and ILGWU (Ladies' Garment Workers) are probable prospects. Less certain, but not to be ruled out, are the Steelworkers. Also on the top board will be faculty and student members from Harvard, M.I.T., Boston University, Tufts, Brandeis, Simmons and other institutions in the Boston

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area and from across the state. And, as indicated by the name of the council, it will stretch out beyond the labor-university frame to embrace community organizations working in such fields as unemployment, housing, health, welfare, taxation, urban planning and the like, personnel from which will serve on the council board.

The original "call" sent out by those attending the formation meeting of the national alliance in February contained this paragraph: "The most urgent concerns of American workers—among them peace, racial justice, job security, decent environments in which to work and live, adequate medical care and Social Security, housing, schools, stable prices—all represent equally the needs of students and faculty members. . . . We wish therefore to encourage programs directed toward increasing the co-operation between the university community and labor organizations to foster our common interests and in this way to promote the political health and social and economic welfare of our nation." To which Wald added, in comments to the press, "The alliance will be oriented not toward a candidate or party, but toward a whole series of issues—political and social."

The "operational" design of the Massachusetts council envisages a series of "task forces" assigned to investigate specific issues deeply and comprehensively, assembling data on them and submitting recommendations. Among the issues suggested as samples by the "labor caucus" initiating the council were reconversion, environment, health care, welfare programs, education and the Indochinese conflict. "These," said the caucus, "clearly do not define all pertinent areas. Other subheadings must be added as task forces define their objectives." The general idea is to create research teams whose composition will combine professional knowledge with the skills of those who have experience in gathering grass-roots information —and to lift the findings up to the level of action through the mass mechanisms of labor unions.

All of this, as far as it has gone, sounds both logical and hopeful. What reasonable labor leader, for example, would reject scholarly assistance to investigate such complicated matters as a system of health care, the sufficiency of unemployment compensation programs, the administration of safety laws, union contract problems posed by new plant technologies, etc? It could be argued, in fact, that unions can no longer do without such assistance, that it is vital if they are to match on anything like even terms the resources available to employers and employer lobbies. And it is obvious, from the response which Wald's enterprise has received from professional colleagues, that a substantial number of scholars are eager to contribute their expert knowledge of social problems to a partnership with labor and community groups that promise to give their work practical meaning, to correlate what they have learned with what happens in society. The same, of course, goes for students, who have been alternately raising hell and sinking into apathy because of their feeling that their studies are unrelated to life in the outside world.

But Victor Reuther's reference to "people in this country . . . trying to divide the workers from the students," while accurate enough, barely hinted at the nature and the historical causes of the profound division in the country's social structure to which almost all other rifts and cleavages of the past twenty-five years can be attributed. The career of the CIO itself illuminates the situation. It burst upon the labor scene in the mid-1930s, with huge sit-down strikes in rubber and auto plants, with mammoth picket-line strikes in the electrical manufacturing industry, with an organizing campaign in steel that overcame by determination and persistence the threats and even violence of the corporations. Within a year there were more than 3 million CIO members in the mass-production industries. Over and above that, the CIO had released energies which the great depression had put to sleep. It drew into its ranks, or into support for its economic and political programs, not only students but artists, scientists, technicians, professionals and intellectuals of all sorts. "Organize the unorganized" was its slogan, and progressive unity was its method. It seemed robust, strong, solid.

Yet the CIO as such was split to pieces after little more than ten years. What wrecked it was the cold war. Or, more precisely, an anti-labor drive conducted as part of the strategy of the grouping which Eisenhower was later to label the military-industrial complex. (He would have done better to dub it the military-industrial-government-mass media complex.) The tactic employed was what used to be called "redbaiting." In the cold war context it meant that anyone who was reluctant to endorse politicians and policies committed to an all-out program of nuclear armament, to an inevitable war with the Soviet Union, was automatically set apart not just a "red" but a traitor as well.

It was this division that split the previously sound structure of the CIO. It was, and it is, this division that characterizes the relationships of the people of the country, each to each and one group to another. By now it has been institutionalized in our thinking, our behavior, our habits. Therefore, in measuring the chances for the success of such a common-sense endeavor as the labor-university-community alliance, the presence and the state of that division must be considered.

One instructive standard of measurement is a comparison of the issues the alliance is preparing to confront with the issues itemized by Franklin Roosevelt in 1944 when he proposed to the people an Economic Bill of Rights. Among the rights named by FDR were these: The right to a useful and remunerative job; to enough income for adequate food, clothing and recreation; to a decent home for every family; to adequate medical care and the opportunity for health; to protection from fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment; to a good education; to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies. Could anything better illustrate the social effect of the cold war-armaments

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program, of the redbaiting anti-communism policy, than the realization that everything stipulated in Roosevelt's Economic Bill of Rights remains to be accomplished? That they are for the most part issues which a labor-university-community alliance twenty-seven years later undertakes to tackle? In other words, the militaristic program forced upon the American people by dividing them with the tactic of redbaiting has been, as far as the vast majority of the people are concerned, economically and socially ruinous. Further, it can be maintained, as every day's news indicates, only by intensified repression under the banner of law and order.

Such are the facts which have surely impelled a few responsible Americans to try to create a movement of cooperation among scholars and scientists, students, labor union officers and members, and community organizers. It remains to be seen, however, whether the facts will prevail or whether they will be overwhelmed by the ravages within our social body of a quarter century and more of redbaiting. When Wald was talking back and forth with UE convention delegates in 1969, someone asked him about chemical and biological weapons. "I'm about to say something horrifying," Wald replied. "I hope it seems that way to you as it does to me. . . . These weapons destroy life without destroying property." Which is as good a description as you can get of the performance of the germ warfare of redbaiting: it destroys the life of the people while it preserves the wealth and property of the corporations. At least temporarily.

Perhaps the alliance projected by Wald and like-minded colleagues from the universities, labor and the communities will be tough enough to come together and stay together in spite of the external—and internal—forces certain to resist so promising an enterprise. If it does, its essential toughness will reside, I think, in the association it can provide for students and young workers. A fourth of contemporary union members are under 30 years of age, somewhere between 4 and 5 million men and women. They constitute what might be described as a subterranean labor movement, whose resentments, frustrations and loss of faith in the system give them in part, although I'm sure Victor Reuther didn't mean it quite this way, what they have in common with students inside or dropped out of educational institutions. One thing that they have, however, and that students don't have, is an organization.

The definitive character of the student movement, of the New Left, in the United States, has been its rootlessness. To date, this has been both a strength and a weakness. A strength in that it has enabled the New Left to stay clear of outworn institutional forms and functions. But a weakness, growing worse with time, in that there is no permanent base of support, nothing from which consistent operations can be conducted. Is it not possible that the base which the New Left needs, and the "people" for which it has been searching, are to be found in the youthful component of the labor movement? There is sufficient evidence in the GE strike of 1969 to suggest that students of the New Left are instinctively moving in that direction.

I have some other evidence of my own. Not long ago I was present at an informal meeting where, for a few hours, several students talked with several young union workers. Nothing special. No agenda. Just conversation about life experience, thoughts, opinions, expectations, work and hopes. Later, I was able to talk separately with each group. Their reaction? They felt it was wonderful, a model of what ought to be going on all the time wherever possible. One of the union members had an idea: that interested students sit in, by union invitation, on the weekly grievance sessions with company representatives, thus learning what goes on in a shop and contributing, not at the sessions themselves but in other informal exchanges with shop stewards and workers, whatever helpful notions they might have from their own background. "The main thing ought to be," said the young union man, "getting to know one another." When I repeated his words to the students they enthusiastically agreed. Of all the constructive possibilities of a university-labor-community alliance, perhaps that simple human sentiment heads the list. It may be worth mentioning, too, that strong political bonds between the working class and intellectuals have helped to produce some of this century's most explosive social changes. □

The ILWU Won't Freeze

MARY ELLEN LEARY

Miss Leary has been a political writer on the West Coast for more than twenty years. She was political editor for the Scripps-Howard San Francisco News *for ten years, then associate editor. Miss Leary was in the first Nieman class at Harvard University to admit women to that fellowship. She is now a free-lance writer.*

San Francisco

President Nixon's back-to-work summons to all striking unions may have prolonged the West Coast ship tie-up, rather than cut it short. At least Harry Bridges, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union suggested this, when, a day ahead of the AFL-CIO resistance statements, Bridges became the first major labor leader to defy the President's freeze plan, charging it "put the burden of fighting inflation on the backs of the working people."

The federal freeze only complicates ILWU bargaining, Bridges indicated, without erasing the impasse over wages and working conditions which had accrued over five past years and on July 1 closed every Pacific port from Mexico to Canada. "Those ships aren't going to sail," he said, "unless the men decide they want them to sail."

The process of bargaining must go on. Not Presidential fiat but only a vote by the men for a contract they can

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approve can terminate the strike, Bridges said. However, one concession to holding the line during the freeze period was the union's suggestion that wage increases, once they are agreed upon, be put into escrow and paid out according to some plan after the ninety-day period ends. But while the union defied the President, it was willing to get back to the bargaining table with Pacific Maritime Administration. ILWU leaders even agreed to move goods which had piled up on the docks. But nothing moves from the ships. Only perishables, military goods, mail and food destined for starving peoples have been moved on or off ships since the strike began.

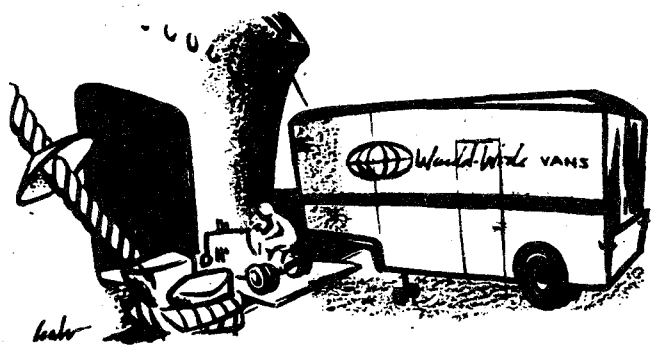
One probably unanticipated side effect of the Nixon proposal that strikes be halted has been a stiffening of ILWU solidarity behind Bridges. The men are impelled to stand firm together by the threat of a wage freeze at the very moment when, for the first time in five years, they are bargaining for a wage increase.

It was the old Harry Bridges at the press conference, crisp, sure, blunt, cocky, his gaunt gray face tilted stubbornly, the Aussie accent burring the edges of his words, giving it to the President straight out that his order "favors the rich." Did he think the President had the authority to get the men back to work? "Nope!" Is he concerned that this resistance may alienate the public from labor? "That could be!" Would he urge the men to ignore a court injunction? "I never said that. But let's see what happens."

A few weeks ago San Francisco was alive with rumors that a "Young Turk" rebellion within the ILWU had compromised Bridges' hold. Young union members, inexperienced in striking, were said to be making demands which reached further than their officers proposed. Twice ILWU members rejected suggestions of compromise brought in by their Coast Negotiation Committee, which Bridges heads.

When Helen Bentley, Federal Maritime Commission chairman, was in San Francisco in mid-July she found "Young Turks" contesting for union leadership and reported publicly that shipowners said they weren't sure, in bargaining with Bridges, that the men would follow him. (In return, ILWU leaders call Mrs. Bentley "the Spiro Agnew of the shipping world" and scoff at her alarms.) It would appear now that the cracks she may have perceived in the ILWU façade have been cemented firm by the battle spirit that has come from resisting President Nixon's order.

It is not easy to anticipate what move the Administration can make. Mrs. Bentley said earlier that the Taft-Hartley eighty-day cooling-off strategy had been tried eight times in past East Coast ship strikes and eight times failed. Yet in the new anti-inflation climate, some pressures of public opinion and of national purpose may make conciliation easier for both shipowners and longshoremen. For one thing, East Coast longshoremen, whose contract expires September 30, will hardly be encouraged to strike for their demands. Starting a strike would seem a lot less likely under a "freeze" than merely continuing one. There had been signs that Bridges hoped to strengthen longshore muscle by some kind of alliance with the East Coast and Gulf International Longshoremen's Association.



Union solidarity on all coasts is obviously greater than it has been ever since Bridges broke away to form his own union more than thirty years ago. ILA officials were guests at the ILWU convention this year. There have been more than customary courtesies between the two organizations, including a $10,000 gift to the West Coast strikers from ILA.

In his weekly column in the ILWU publication Bridges recently said: "I for one would have to think twice before dumping the idea of merging with the ILA in one union if I knew it was certain in advance that such action would win for us the demands set forth in our strike program." But that was before the freeze. Now prospects of an ILA strike are dim, especially because the men on the East Coast and Gulf have one major advantage which West Coast longshoremen are striking to obtain: a guaranteed wage. Wage improvement, Bridges said, constitutes the major union goal right now.

So fast has been improvement in the loading and unloading of ships under Harry Bridges' famous "mechanization and modernization" contracts of 1960 and 1966 that the longshoremen see tonnage across the Pacific docks increasing mightily and their own hours of work dwindling. As productivity per man-hour leaps ahead, work hours drop.

Central in the ILWU demands is a guarantee of forty hours' work, or the pay for it. The East Coast and Gulf union has this proviso. The ILWU had it in 1960. But in 1966 the Western waterfront was so busy (with Vietnam and rising Japanese trade) that the guarantee fund for a minimum thirty-five hours of work had never once been tapped.

They divided the pool up among all the men that year and simply dropped the idea of a guaranteed minimum amount of work from the new contract. It seemed far less important then than a high wage increase. Only in the past eighteen months has this omission become a problem. Before that, a West Coast longshoreman could work just about as long each week as he could stand up, if he wanted to, for he could sign up for all the overtime he cared to tackle.

Now, the impact of mechanization is suddenly being felt. Containerization jumped 26 per cent on the Pacific Coast last year alone. The tonnage one man could handle per hour rose astonishingly, in the past four years alone, from 1.182 tons to 1.504. One report claimed by rough estimates that productivity had risen 80 per cent in 1968 above the 1960 level.

The original contract, geared to speed mechanization so that longshoremen's backbreaking work could be eased,

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was also geared to speed retirement of the older union members. A bonus system, representing their share in mechanization, baited retirement. It worked. But what hadn't been anticipated was the surge of shipping in the mid-1960s which made it necessary to add new longshoremen to the union membership. One economist indicates that about half the men in the ILWU today have been added since the 1960 agreement. Very few men are left who went through the bitter 1934 San Francisco strike, whose "Bloody Thursday" they solemnly commemorated July 5.

The careful calculation by which Bridges anticipated that his union could limit membership as jobs declined was upset by history. He leads men now whose expectations are far higher than those who battled against the casual, catch-as-catch-can jobs of the pre-1934 waterfront, subject to the morning "shape-up" and the bribery of gang leaders, before the union ran the hiring hall and put jobs on a rotation basis. As the longshoremen see it, Pacific Maritime Administration has not come near to negotiating their demands. "Something may give suddenly," one official said. "But in terms of where we are and where they are, this could be a long strike."

With older leadership concerned over pension provisions (the ILWU asks a $500 monthly payment at age 63 after twenty-five years' work) and other benefits for the ailing and injured, younger workers want results in today's paycheck. They ask, in addition to the guaranteed forty hours pay, an increase of $1.60 an hour over the present base of $4.28, added in steps over two years. The ship lines want a three-year contract. Pacific Maritime Association feels it can't meet both these demands from the opposite ends of the union rank and file, the young and the older men. Differences, however, are over dollars more than principle. The ship lines have made an offer of a guaranteed wage, but the ILWU didn't like the sum or the way it was parceled. The union is taking the position that the freeze concept does not apply to the guaranteed annual wage. On this they are adamant.

But if economics, government threat and public opinion drive the ILWU and shipowners to reach accord over the price of their contract package, no outside pressure promises help with another contract issue. That is the question of who shall unpack and repack containers whose contents must be shuffled about before or after shiploading. There is no dispute over containers sealed from sender to receiver, hoisted aboard ship unopened. But freight forwarders and others have found ways to get good shipping rates by bulking many small orders into a single container for train or truck haul, the goods to be redistributed into other containers at dockside or convenient terminals, for the next leg of their journey.

To longshoremen, containers are simply "movable sections of the ship's hold." They consider handling their contents merely a modern extension of what they have always done. The West Coast longshoremen have put the onus on the shipowners to make sure that all "stuffing" and "unstuffing" of containers remains their job. This sets a collision course with the Teamsters, who have garnered many contracts for such cargo transshipments at various West Coast ports. The Teamsters are as determined to retain this work as the longshoremen are to recover it, though both use dodges to avoid calling this a jurisdictional dispute.

Diminishing job opportunities is the central problem for longshoremen; probably no other work force in the United States has encountered the effect of mechanization on such a scale in recent years. That is the economic pinch the West Coast union confronts. How the rest of the nation resolves problems of inflation is quite a separate issue. □

ULSTER: A KIND OF PLAGUE

ANDREW BOYD
Mr. Boyd writes on politics and economics for the New Statesman, Tribune, The Economist, Spectator, *and widely in the Irish press on both sides of the border. He is the author of* Holy War in Belfast.

Belfast

"A space of ground, designed by Heaven for an Akeldama, doomed to be destroyed from the face of the earth, and all that would be found in it would perish with it"—thus wrote Daniel Defoe in *A Journal of the Plague Year*, and though he wrote of London in 1665 when the plague decimated the population, his words today might describe Northern Ireland where, to quote from Defoe once again, "it is a wonder the whole people do not rise up as one man and abandon their dwellings."

Thousands of people have, in fact, already abandoned their dwellings in the city of Belfast, but under the threat of armed men. They are refugees in the place where they were born. Many others have gone with their wives and children to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, or to some distant country where they hope life will be more civilized than in Ulster. More will follow them.

They are all fleeing from a kind of plague, a political system that threatens their lives and their well-being. They see Northern Ireland as a place doomed to be destroyed. Yet while they and other innocent people suffer, or perish, or leave the country, others prosper. There are men in Parliament today, and there are defunct politicians back in power, who but for the disorders of the past two years would now be insignificant. Lives have been lost, homes destroyed, families made miserable—and fortunes made and careers of mediocre politicians promoted.

Destruction of the entire Ulster system seems the only solution, because fifty years of Unionist government and more than 150 years of Orange dominance have engendered such a deep hatred between Catholics and Protestants that civil life is impossible. The burning of Bombay Street in August 1969 by, as one witness has attested, half-naked and painted fanatics from the Protestant

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ghettos in West Belfast, was a ghastly proof that anarchy had been the outcome of Unionist rule.

Civil government in Ulster has become impossible because what passes for a parliament at Stormont is but an assembly dominated by men who believe that the bitterness they and their forebears have engendered and lived upon must prevail. That, they think, is the only sure way to retain power in Protestant hands and to keep Ulster safely within the United Kingdom. The alternatives to membership in the U.K. would be an impoverished and isolated Ulster, or an all-Ireland state the majority of whose people would be Catholics.

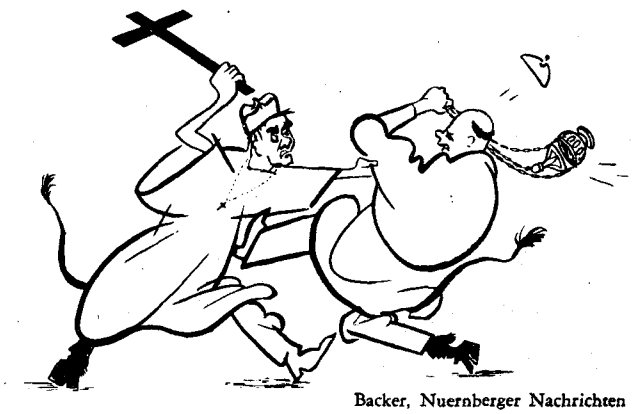
The fundamental viewpoint of the Ulster Unionists—as expressed by Ian Paisley, by Rev. Martin Smyth who is now the leading spokesman for the Orange Order, by William Craig, an ex-member of the Stormont government, and, until Faulkner brought him back into the Cabinet, by Mr. Harry West—is that there shall not be a united Ireland. Ulster is British, they assert, and will remain so.

They will not concede equal rights to Northern Ireland's Catholic minority, nor will they have anything to do with a "federal solution" that would put Stormont in the same relationship to the Dublin Parliament as it now is to the Westminster Parliament. They will not share power with the Catholics in administering Northern Ireland. They will not accept orders and directions from London. And if the need arises they will resist, probably by force of arms, any move that would abolish the Stormont government and Parliament and return Ulster to the direct jurisdiction of Westminster.

Indeed, a manifesto issued by the Belfast County Grand Orange Lodge on July 8 warned Westminster that "in the event of the constitution being suspended or abrogated against the will of the people, freely and democratically expressed for half a century, we further pledge ourselves to work unremittingly for its complete restoration without tie or bond." The authors of this manifesto are seemingly more careful in their choice of words than were the Unionists who compiled and circulated the Ulster Covenant of 1912—a seditious document. The original covenant stated that Unionists and Orangemen would use "all means which would be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament for Ireland." That they did not shrink from armed rebellion was proven by the raising of the Ulster Volunteer Force, the illegal importation of guns, and the declaration of a Provisional Government for Ulster—all on the eve of World War I.

The words of the July manifesto are the words of Martin Smyth, who is Master of the Belfast County Grand Orange Lodge. They are the words of William Craig whose favorite slogan, "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right," rallied the Unionists, when it was first uttered by Lord Randolph Churchill in 1886, against Irish Home Rule. They are also the words of those other leading Unionists, including the present Premier, Brian Faulkner, who have said that if Stormont is abolished or "the constitution of Northern Ireland" suspended, Protestant reaction would be widespread and violent.

"Ulster is Ours" proclaimed the July street banners in



Backer, Nuernberger Nachrichten

all the Protestant ghettos of Belfast where, as well as the banners, 50,000 red-and-white Ulster flags were predominant over the Union Jack. And what is that but a virtual declaration of Protestant independence and a reiteration, in new words, of the assertion by Northern Ireland's first Prime Minister, forty years ago, that Stormont was a "Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people"?

The Ulster Unionists would make a real and unilateral declaration of independence, as Ian Smith has done in Rhodesia, if they could afford it. But they are dependent on British subsidies and can afford little. Yet they continue to believe that they are "absolutely right" and not in any way to blame for the present state of affairs in Northern Ireland.

Others they certainly blame—the British Government for interfering, the Irish Republican Army, civil rights movement, an international conspiracy of Maoists, Trotskyists, red anarchists and black revolutionaries. Jack Lynch, the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic, is to blame, as is Harold Wilson, the British Labour leader, and Terence O'Neill, the former Stormont Premier, for being an appeaser.

But as for themselves, the Unionists plead complete innocence of the charges made against them by Lord Cameron in his report, by Lord Hunt who disarmed and reformed the Royal Ulster Constabulary, or by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. Moreover, they are convinced, like Martin Smyth and like the Orange historian M. W. Dewar, that the border in Ireland is the other side of a Hadrian's Wall that protects the Protestant world from the encroachments of Rome.

It is impossible to negotiate with men who hold such views. James Callaghan, when he was British Home Secretary, found them difficult to deal with. He probably feared them. Reginald Maudling, the present Home Secretary, purports to be indifferent and leaves matters in Northern Ireland to the British Army chiefs and to London's special representative in Belfast.

Maudling's indifference may mean that Britain really has turned its back on Northern Ireland and would dearly love to be back in those days, before the rise of the civil rights movement, when the complaints of Ulster's Catholic minority could be ignored, and Stormont left, with its Special Constables and armed RUC, to maintain law and order. It also seems—at least it seems so to the Catholics in Northern Ireland—that the people of the Irish Republic

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have taken a lead from their Premier, Mr. Lynch, and want to hear nothing more about Ulster. They are certainly thankful they have not been embroiled.

Radio-Telefis Eireann, the Republic's state broadcasting service, seems to regard the whole Ulster tragedy as a peep show, a menagerie in which performing bears like Paisley, Martin Smyth, William Craig, and other Unionist irreconcilables may be displayed to terrify or amuse an RTE audience. Nobody seems to show any sympathy for the ordinary people of Northern Ireland who have to live and work and rear their children in the midst of chaos and hatred and murder. □

VIETNAM VETERANS

THE WOUNDED WAIT IN LINE

JIM CASTELLI
Mr. Castelli is an assistant editor with The Catholic News *in New York. He has written on veterans' affairs for* The Catholic News *and* Catholic World.

One of the most incomprehensible tragedies of the Indochinese war has been the shabby treatment of the men who have had to fight it. They can't understand their experience, and no one seems able to explain it to them; when they return, they can't find work—almost 400,000 of them are unemployed; they may have become addicted to heroin while in Southeast Asia; and, while helicopter evacuation and medical progress have kept alive many men who would have died in previous wars, conditions in most VA hospitals make proper treatment and rehabilitation virtually impossible.

Hearings conducted by Sen. Alan Cranston (D., Calif.) for the Veterans Affairs Subcommittee in November and December 1969 unearthed many of these problems. Publicity such as the famous *Life* article on the VA hospitals helped push through a $105 million budget increase, still less than the subcommittee had recommended.

But at hearings conducted by the newly formed Veterans Health and Hospitals Subcommittee, April 27-29, Cranston heard that the entire $105 million had been spent without a penny used to hire new medical staff, the system's most urgent need; moreover, the Office of Management and the Budget has ordered a cutback in the average daily patient census which will reduce the patient load in the VA hospitals by 47,000 a year, despite the fact that there are now 5,000 veterans on waiting lists, four times more than in December.

The budget office has ordered the VA to cut the average daily patient census to 79,000, down from 86,500 last year, and below the projected 84,500 for this year. Some 852,000 patients were expected for fiscal year 1972, but the budget office has allowed for only 805,000, based on a planned 6 per cent increase in patient turnover. Cranston calls this "unrealistic in terms of our aging veteran population and with wounded veterans continuing to pour in." Vietnam wounded are approaching 400,000, and the average age of the World War II vet is 52.

Cranston learned from the April hearings that there were more than enough qualified applicants available to fill current vacancies. Believing that most of these people were available because of the slowdown in the economy, and might have found other jobs if they had to wait for 1972 funds to become available, he wrote to Sen. John Pastore, chairman of the Subcommittee on Independent Offices Appropriations, asking for funds to hire 8,000 more doctors, nurses, practical nurses, and other personnel for the last month of fiscal 1971. Congress approved the funds, and the staff was hired, mandating a cost of $95.4 million for the full year in fiscal year 1972.

Critics charge that, while the medical-surgical care in the VA hospitals is among the best, staff shortages are responsible for a complete breakdown in postoperative care and rehabilitation. The new appropriations were to raise the staff-patient ratio to 1.366 to 1, but the continued high average daily patient census has put the ratio at 1.299 to 1. The average ratio in public hospitals is 2.7 to 1; in university hospitals, it is 3.5-4 to 1.

Cranston said the additional appropriations removed any doubt about the desire of Congress to improve staffing conditions, but his proposed $391 million budget for fiscal year 1972 was more than $100 million above what the Senate subsequently approved, which in turn was $100 million more than the House had approved.

But no matter the will of Congress, it seems that the final say will belong to the budget office and the Veterans Administration, both of which are far more committed to "holding down inflation" and saving money than to providing adequate health care for veterans.

Referring to the way that last year's $105 million additional appropriation was spent, Michael Burns, executive director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, asked "What has the Veterans Administration . . . told us, by their actions, about how they feel? I submit that by diverting these funds into areas other than patient care, or by simply not expending them, the VA has told us that it still maintains that it did not need help, it did not need supplementation, and it did not want either advice or Congressional generosity."

Burns, who also charged the VA with "lackadaisical" recruitment policies, decried the VA's attitude that "What I say, and not what you see, is truth." The VA has maintained all along that it could manage; pressure came from Congress and veterans, not VA higher-ups.

Of the $105 million, $31 million (twice what was projected) went into reducing the veterans' dental backlog to a "manageable level"; $46 million went into pay increases and adjustments, additional employee benefits, etc.; $26.4 million went into additional operational costs, equipment, replacement, and so on; this left $1.6 million for contract and fee dialysis and contract hospitalization.

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Charles L. Huber, national director of Legislation for the Disabled American Veterans, notes that all of these expenses were "necessary and used for good purposes," but that the initial amount was much too small. He also told the subcommittee that: "We have heard it said, over the years, that VA medical budgets have been successively larger; and while the records reveal that this is so, we think it serves to cast facts in a completely misleading light. Despite the showing of larger appropriations figures in the medical budget each fiscal year, the fact remains that the funding increases were being consumed by inflation and rising costs. This in turn contributed to a shortage of doctors, nurses, technicians, and other supporting personnel. These were the principal factors which, in our opinion, made it necessary for the VA to eliminate several thousand beds from its hospital system within the past several years. In short, the problem has not been 'excessive beds' but a shortage of adequate funds and a concurrent shortage of medical personnel to operate the beds."

Huber also pointed out that the reduction in the dental backlog was an indication that the VA could accomplish things when it wanted to.

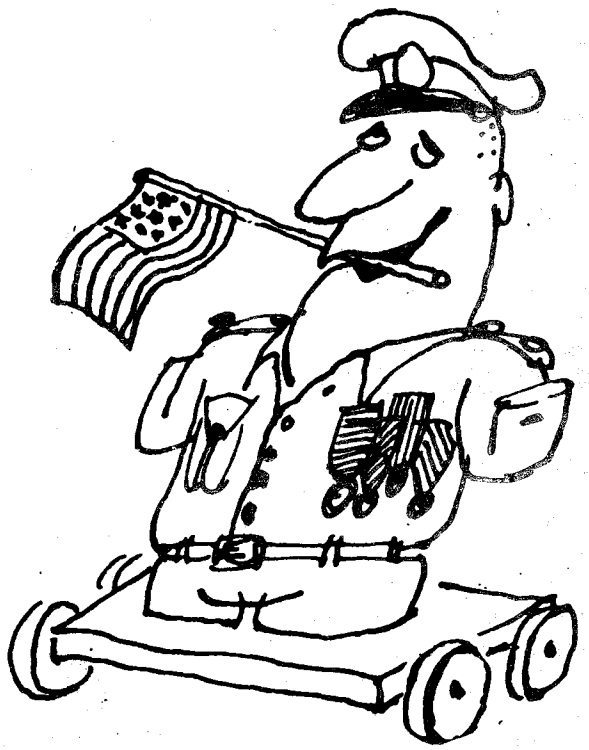
This decline is intentional, according to Francis W. Stover, director of the National Legislative Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars. He claims that a plan exists in the budget office to do away with the VA hospitals; he noted that the decreased patient load could save the Office of Management and Budget $116,583,000 next year alone.

Stover said that in 1965 the then Bureau of the Budget persuaded President Johnson to close thirty-two VA hospitals; opposition led Johnson to change his mind, but Stover maintains that the budget office merely changed its strategy from direct attack to attrition—by reducing the average daily patient census, the budget office could force many of the VA hospitals to close.

Stover charges that "this annual drastic cut in the number of veterans being treated on a daily basis did not occur by happenstance. The VFW has obtained information from unimpeachable sources which indicates that this is part of a long-range budget plan which has been in operation for several years. According to this plan, by fiscal year 1975 the average daily patient load will be down to less than 70,000. This will result, according to the plan, in the actual closing of twenty-eight to thirty VA hospitals. With such a relatively small number of patients being treated on an average daily basis, it will be very difficult to prevent the closings of hospitals."

There may be valid reasons for phasing out the VA hospitals, such as an attempt, under a National Health System, to provide one class of medical care for all. The recent requests of some veterans that they be allowed to go to their family doctors and private hospitals for treatment, with the VA footing the bill, is a step in this direction. But as things stand now, you can't just phase out numbers of veterans when living people still need some place to go.

Cranston points out that "aged and impoverished veterans who are denied admission to the VA hospitals will turn to public and private hospitals where care under tax-supported Medicaid and Medicare is far more expensive." The average cost of Medicare is $73 a day, compared to $54 in the VA hospitals. Some 2,800 vets in New York City alone could be forced into public and private hospitals.



Picha, The Special (Belgium)

The most macabre aspect of the whole VA hospital question is the existence of what Cranston calls "a new kind of body count—it is a body count of the lives of American soldiers lost because of a failure to provide them proper medical support." The comment came after three doctors from the VA hospital at Wadsworth, in Los Angeles, testified that at least five veterans had died at the hospital because of shortages of staff and equipment.

The three, Bernhard Votteri, a Fellow in pulmonary diseases; John Messenger, a senior Fellow of cardiology, and acting director of the Coronary Care Unit; and J. Gary Davidson, chief medical resident, painted a detailed picture of the way in which shortages in every area from doctors and nurses to clerical help and escort service have taken such a heavy toll on the patients. The pressure on the staff is not to be ignored either; a nurse who often finds herself trying to decide which of her fifty patients needs her most, who can't take a thirty-minute supper break because another overburdened nurse would have to cover for her, and who spends extra hours doing the charting she doesn't get a chance to do while on tour, will be lucky if she doesn't end up a patient herself.

"We now, tragically, find ourselves counting the lives of American servicemen lost here at home," says Cranston. "The failure of the Administration to face up to this tragedy is beyond understanding."

That, simply stated, is the whole problem. If Nixon were truly a "hawk," he would be eager to see that the men he sends on America's crusades were well taken care of. But a mentality which would prolong a war such as this one must find it difficult to think in terms of personal anguish. It's no secret that there have been no victory parades for the returning veterans, but there's no law which says that glory and proper health care must go together.

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The medical treatment of the Vietnam veteran has prompted Dr. Howard Levy to ask if we are entering "a new marketing era—the age of the disposable GI."

One reason the situation is so bad is the way we have come to look at war. If a soldier returns alive and unhurt, we can say he's lucky, pretend he never left, and leave his psychological problems to well up inside; if he doesn't come back, we can tell ourselves that he died for his country, that he died for a cause—all of the rationalizations with which the families of dead men have deluded themselves for centuries.

It is the seriously wounded vet who brings us face to face with the reality of war, for he is a living symbol of its waste. With him, there is no diversionary past or future; it is he who upsets our dreams and makes reality painful, so it is he whom we reject.

Former Captain (now Georgia state Senator) Max Cleland, a triple amputee whose testimony at the 1969 hearings made him the most quoted pre-John Kerry vet in America, told this year's hearings:

"It seems particularly cruel to me as a Vietnam veteran to see the men involved in the Vietnamese War come back and possibly face the prospect of being put on a hospital waiting list or to have to stand in line in an outpatient clinic. It makes me wonder whether this nation has ever faced up to the human cost of this war.

"In 1951, Gen. "Chesty" Puller, the most decorated Marine out of World War II, commented when the American people lost their enthusiasm for our involvement in Korea that 'What the American people want to do is fight a war without getting hurt!'

"I wonder if this is not our national attitude about Vietnam. It seems we want to save Vietnam, but not pay the cost in human tragedy that it takes to do it. The Vietnam veteran is caught in the middle of this dilemma. He is sent to Vietnam as a matter of national policy, but when it comes to providing the increased money for sufficient staff and facilities for the proper maintenance of our VA hospitals, that is another matter.

"We have cheated in this area of our national life long enough. Either we are going to gear up and provide the bed space and staff necessary to take care of our veterans or else we will incur for the rest of this century the bitterness and wrath of those who have fought for us." □

LETTERS *(Continued from page 162)*

pointed out, most of this world they are talking about is not free at all. What does this phrase mean? It means, simply, that any government that is not Communist is (actually or potentially) free for "American" corporate enterprise.

Well, our own freedom and security at home have had to be protected and extended time and again by taking on these enormous corporate organizations. In the days of the New Deal we had to oppose them strenuously in order to obtain the freedom to organize and the security of collective bargaining for the workingman. Now we find ourselves opposing them again with Nader's Raiders to obtain greater freedom and security for the consumer. And again, with Barry Commoner, Paul Ehrlich and others, to secure ourselves from eco-catastrophe.

If the survival of our system and the welfare of our people has required strenuous efforts on our part to regulate and redirect our corporate decision makers at home, why, as liberals, should we think the situation otherwise abroad? Indeed, where outside of the twenty-four or so democracies has the public the freedom, the education, the experience, even to attempt with a modicum of success, to peacefully regulate and redirect its elites?

In the so-called "free world" of our brilliant Harvard liberals (who are at one with Barry Goldwater on this issue) the corporations are free to wheel and deal with local elites, regardless of the welfare of the mass of the people, and regardless of their effect on the natural environment. It is to protect this freedom, alas, that our men have died in Vietnam. It is for that sort of "free world" that we have intervened in Guatemala, Santo Domingo, Iran and elsewhere.

As liberals, it seems to me, we need desperately to get our foreign policy in line with our domestic policy. If we have to regulate and redirect corporate enterprises at home (for, in the long run, their good as well as ours), then we need to cooperate with those who would do likewise abroad. At home this can be done peacefully: abroad it may well require revolution in most cases.

Given the present climate of opinion in the United States, I do not see any likelihood of either major political party (or even any influential segment thereof) accepting the sort of orientation to foreign policy herein proposed. The best thing to do, then, is to call a halt. Blow the whistle on foreign aid and interventionism. Until we can move further along toward lessening domestic tensions and ameliorating domestic problems (both societal and ecological), the best we can do for the rest of the world is to do as little as possible *for* them or *to* them. It will take time to get our own house out of its crises. Meanwhile, the more we do as "leader of the world," the worse we make things—for ourselves and for everyone else. We cannot even have a "Food for Peace" program without having it perverted into a military and political weapon for the *status quo*. . . .

Those who think in glib slogans will call this "neo-isolationism." I can quite easily remember the isolationism of the 1930s: it was an interventionism that said "Hands off Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy" (because they were anti-Communist), but wanted the Marines in Mexico (because they were Commies for taking over their own oil resources). These great "liberals," Rusk, Rostow, Kennedy, Johnson, et al, have accomplished what the "isolationists" of the 1930s could not do: they have expanded American interventionism from Latin America to the entire globe. "Isolationism" is the other side of the propaganda coin of "Interventionism." It's a bad penny altogether. The two words really do mean the same thing: let our corporate magnates and their "experts" do what they damn please with our foreign policy. I'm just saying "No." That is not the way to obtain a secure future for my country—including its corporate magnates. . . .

The world is headed for a frightful mess—overpopulation, pollution, fantastically disfunctional social systems, and all the rest—and we're going to have to be cool, calm and collected if we're to help ourselves and others. We're anything but cool, calm, or collected right now. . . .

Eqbal Ahmad's "The Theory and Fallacies of Counter-insurgency" (*The Nation*, Aug. 2) did not tell me much that was new. However, my thanks to him for putting it in a clear, succinct and handy package, and my thanks to you for publishing it. It is hard for me to believe that the Vietnamese tragedy has been our tragedy for more than twenty years: that the "liberals" with whom I opposed fascism in the '30s have been such shallow thinkers all this time. It has all given me an indescribable *Angst*.

Laurence G. Wolf, Assoc. Prof. of Geography
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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Life As A Mandala

GEORGE WOODCOCK
Mr. Woodcock is a historian, biographer and literary critic. He has recently completed a study of Aldous Huxley.

"What you do yourself in the literary art is so perfectly different from what you so pertinaciously push in the visual arts," complained Wyndham Lewis to Herbert Read in 1948, "that the secret of this duality would be for me quite impenetrable had I not known you in the days when Hulme was lecturing on 'Abstract Art.'" Lewis, who himself when he first knew Read round about 1917, had violently oscillated as a painter between the abstract and the representational, had come in the later 1940s to the mood in which he was to write *The Demon of Progress in the Arts* (1954), his truculent attack on what he regarded as the degenerate cult of Abstract Expressionism. He saw Read as the near personification of the demon he sought to exorcise, a slave to the pursuit of the new. "Pundits such as my friend Read," he told James Thrall Soby in 1947, "like to suggest that life is always just beginning and that they are in at the birth if not the actual midwife."

If he had lived to witness it, Lewis would have relished his old friend's apparent change of heart almost twenty years afterward, for during the 1960s, having spent four decades welcoming every new movement in the visual arts, from Dada to Contructivism and from Surrealism to Abstract Expressionism, Read finally came to the point of nonacceptance when he encountered Pop Art, and summarized his arguments against the movement and against the action painters in an essay—posthumously published—entitled "The Limits of Permissiveness in the Arts" (*Malahat Review*, January 1969).

This essay is so crucial to the assessment of Read as an aesthetic and social philosopher that it is worth quoting two of its more significant passages. The shock of feeling obliged, at the end of a life of praising revolution in the arts, to make a final gesture rejecting a revolution gone too far, forced Read to define his views on the necessary qualities of true art more clearly than ever before.

> Art, in any meaningful sense of the word, must have three essential qualities: a formal correspondence in emotion and feeling, clarity (what that great contemporary Wilson Knight calls "a swift forward-flowing transparency"), and a vital imagination, the struggle, as Coleridge defined it, "to idealize and unify." The visual arts especially must exemplify this last quality, but it is the quality singularly lacking in the fragmented painting and sculpture of recent years.

The essay ends with a plea for that *mesure*—or moderation—which Camus had made the leitmotif of *The Rebel*, a book for which Read wrote an introduction when it appeared in English and which greatly influenced his own subsequent thought.

> The artist, like any other citizen, must protest when political liberty is threatened or a censorship imposed on the freedom of thought. His moral behavior is determined by the ancient precept: beauty is truth, truth beauty, though for "beauty" we might substitute another concept, such as unity. Beauty is not necessarily the aim of the contemporary artist. But if he substitutes another principle, such as vitality, he must still accept this other necessity, which I have called unity. Contemporary nihilism in art is simply a denial of art itself, a rejection of its social function. The refusal to recognize the limits of art is the reason why as critics we withhold our approval from all those manifestations of permissiveness characterized by incoherence, insensibility, brutality and ironic detachment. The exercise of such judgment calls for the utmost critical rectitude—for the maintenance of the supremacy of aesthetic criteria—if we are not to fall into old errors of judging art according to values that belong to another sphere of life—religious, moral, hedonistic or technological. What we seek is a "renaissance beyond the limits of nihilism." We cannot yet determine the outlines of such a renaissance, but we know that they must remain outside the sphere of art.

Such a statement, made at the end of Read's long career, after he had established and sustained for a whole generation the reputation of a neophiliac in the arts and an anarchist in politics, appears to be a complete denial of his past.

Yet a closer consideration reveals that the idea of *mesure*, of the balancing of opposites into unity, runs through the whole of Read's writings. Expressed in the titles of his works—*Reason and Romanticism, Anarchy and Order, The Contrary Experience, Icon and Idea, Annals of Innocence and Experience*—it finds a striking living manifestation in the image of the anarchist who becomes Sir Herbert and—almost immediately—manifests the errant quality of his knighthood by advancing out of a lifelong habit of philosophic radicalism into the open rebellion of the war-resisting Committee of 100 and for the first time, at the age of 68, participating in street demonstrations and courting arrest. Yet shortly afterward Read was to call the Committee of 100 to order for an activism exceeding the bounds of reasonableness (or *mesure*) and then, proceeding into the aesthetic sphere, to write "The Limits of Permissiveness in the Arts." When he died an unbeliever, he was buried in the yard of the Saxon church at Kirkdale in the Yorkshire dales, where he had been baptized seventy-five years before; on his grave was raised a stone which bears the legend, "Herbert Read, Knight, Poet, Anarchist," a metaphorical if not a visual circle.

Read's critics have feasted happily on the contradictions they detect in his life and his writings. Read himself was more perturbed by the seemingly irresistible urge—a "missionary" urge he once called it in defending himself against the hectoring of that aesthetic bully and prig, Edward Dahlberg—which led him to spend half his later life wandering the earth to preach the gospel of "education through art" to largely uncomprehending audiences, instead of devoting himself to the poetry which he regarded as his true vocation.

The question must always arise for Read's admirers, as it arises for the admirers of Dylan Thomas: had he in fact any more poetry to produce than he actually wrote? Were Read's lecturing jaunts, like Thomas' boozily histrionic progresses between American campuses, a substitute rather than an alternative? Thomas had virtually ceased to write lyric poetry when he became a peripatetic reader of it, and Read's original works, so few in comparison with his great output of literary, artistic and political criticism, always produce the idea of a concise and limited sufficiency. There is a sparse completeness of plot and structure, an economical directness of language about his one novel, *The Green Child*, which gives a sense of appropriateness to the knowledge that this was his only work of fiction except for a never published novella for children, *Penny Wise and Pound Foolish*. He wrote a single full-length play, *The Parliament of Women*, insuffi-

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ciently appreciated by his contemporaries and printed only in a very small limited edition; a second play, *Old Lovers' Ghosts,* whose early scenes are in the Read archive at the University of Victoria together with the manuscript of *Penny Wise and Pound Foolish,* was never completed. Even Read's verse was a scanty harvest for one who considered himself above all a poet. His *Collected Poems* of 1964, the winnowed product of fifty years, contained just over 250 pages of text—undecorated, honed-down poems, each, like *The Green Child,* sufficient within its own sparse form. Even if one adds his volume of autobiographies, *The Contrary Experience,* which contains that lucid jewel of childhood recollection, *The Innocent Eye,* Read's complete non-expository writing, including the unpublished items, would fit easily into four small volumes. His critical and expository writings on the arts and politics are several times more voluminous.

A great deal that is puzzling about Read—his limited output as a poet and novelist as well as his apparent contradictions of standpoint—can be better understood if we recognize the peculiar pattern within which he shaped his career. Most men foresee their lives in a trajectory of progress. The momentum may decline and the arc may fall, but when it reaches ground they have proceeded farther forward than they were at the beginning. Read, on the other hand, conceived his life as a circular pattern of departure and return, the ancient pattern—which so greatly fascinated him in art—of the mandala.

This shape, which his life had literally assumed before his death, was symbolically foreshadowed in his writing, and especially in *The Green Child.* A man who calls himself Olivero returns, after the decades that separate youth and late manhood, to his childhood village in Yorkshire. As the second part of the book reveals in a flashback narrative, he has led a life of curious adventure that has placed him finally in the position of benevolent dictator in a tiny republic on the fringe of the Andes; tiring of power, he has arranged his succession, faked his assassination, and proceeded slowly homeward. His adventures in Latin America are extraordinary, but as plausible as the peaceful egalitarian order he creates; when he returns to the setting of his past, he finds, apart from the reasonable changes that decay and technological change have wrought, an extraordinary dislocation of natural law. The stream that crosses the village has changed its direction, and now appears to flow upward to its source on the moors.

Curious and perturbed, Olivero follows the ascending stream and arrives at a mill he remembers; looking into the window, he sees a man trying to feed lamb's blood to a terrified woman, and recognizes the man as Kneeshaw, whom he had known as a destructive schoolboy, and the woman as the Green Child who appeared mysteriously in the village just after his departure so many years ago. The two men fight; Kneeshaw falls in the millrace and is drowned. Olivero then lets the Green Child guide him to the moors. They rest beside the stream, and he tells the tale of his adventures that forms the second part of the book. Finally, on the crest of the moors, they come to the pond into which the stream is flowing back, and stepping in, descend in a bubble of air to the underworld from which the Green Child has come.

In the underworld Olivero enters the life of the green people. Physically it is intensely simple. Plants in the caverns provide a monotonous sufficiency of diet and a uniform dress. In youth the green people live in a natural, almost animal state of promiscuously sensual enjoyment. The time comes when they ascend to the level of craftsmanship and responsibility, rising from food gatherers to polishers of crystals and arrangers of crystalline chimes, the highest art forms. After a further interlude of discourse among peripatetic philosophers, Olivero reaches the final stage of life in the underworld; he spends his last days sitting in a remote cave, contemplating the crystals and their harmonies, and when he dies is petrified into a giant crystal to be stored in the graves of the dead which are steadily encroaching on the room for the living.

The Green Child stirred C. G. Jung, when he read it in 1948, to "a rumbling in the depths that kept me awake all night." The book, with its underworld, its magic pool, with Kneeshaw as the *Doppelgänger* shadow, the Green Child as Anima and the wise old men in their caves, formed a perfect Jungian pattern that delighted the seer of Zürich, but Jung also showed, in the long letter he wrote after reading the book, that he recognized how closely and personally it projected Read's own mental state in a situation —he was at this time Jung's English publisher and a prodigiously active impresario of the visual arts—where he could not help "being immensely useful and efficient." But "you discover after 20-30 years that the thing you really meant, has been left behind in your native village. What you rediscover is a compensation for all the things you have professed and lived for a lifetime."

Jung wrote that letter in 1948. By 1949 Read took the first step in the journey of return and rediscovery. He bought a country rectory a few miles away from the farmhouse which he had left at the age of 10 for the gloom of an English mill town. His idea was a progressive immersion in a natural way of existence. He confessed at this time—a paradoxical admission for one who had written *Art and Industry* and had directed an Industrial Design Unit in London—that he had always been fundamentally antagonistic to the machine; his views on art in its social manifestations had always been rooted in his readings of Ruskin and Morris, and a rejection of machine civilization had perhaps been one of the concealed motivations in his attempt to make industrial products aesthetically inoffensive. He thought of farming his few acres; I had gone to British Columbia that year with a similar intent based on an admiration for Thoreau which I shared with Read, and we exchanged many letters on the problems of the London-oriented intellectual regressing into a rural pattern. Read even hoped—in vain, as it turned out—that at least one of his sons would become a farmer and reestablish a family link with the land which he had been the first of his line to break. As years passed—he lived nineteen more of them after his return to Yorkshire—he gradually shed his links with publishing, and traveled less, though in 1959 he went to China and wrote to me that "the communes are as near to our kind of anarchism as anything that is likely to happen," and in 1968, the year of his death, he went to Cuba. He spent most of the life left to him preparing volumes of the essays and lectures he had written on the visual arts, but the best works he wrote in those final years were all connected with his return to Yorkshire—with the stream running back to its source: his verse dialogue, *Moon's Farm,* his loosely structured autobiography, *The Contrary Experience,* and *Henry Moore* (1965), in which, tracing a fellow Yorkshireman's recourse to the sources of his life to create a highly symbolic art, he mirrored his own return.

Within this mandala pattern contradictions so often detected in Read's work are seen to be more apparent than real. As J. F. Hendry wrote, a quarter of a century ago, referring significantly to Read's "rounded view": "He has termed himself 'romantic,' but actually, in his poetry as in his philosophy, we are constantly aware of this dialectical interplay between reason and emotion, between rational, ordered judgment and the 'sense of glory.'" One of the most important modern interpreters of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley, Read reflected in his work a division that already existed in these poets, between the stress on emotion and a deep sense of the power of

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reason. All three, unlike Keats, had at one time been—as Read himself became—admirers of William Godwin, who carried faith in the essential reasonableness of man to a more than logical extremity.

In Read's own work the duality of approach appears in his poetry and in his imaginative prose, where the blurred expression of Victorian neo-romanticism is replaced by a sharpness of image and focus put to the service of an emotion tempered by a Yorkshire taciturnity; it is present also in the classically clear prose of his writings on art, which, as an academic friend recently remarked to me, are "democratic" in the sense that they deliberately avoid the jargon by which aestheticians customarily exclude the unspecialized reader.

Anarchism, to which Read came in his youth, before World War I, was a natural doctrine for such a writer to adopt, first because some varieties of it (particularly those sponsored by peasant-oriented aristocrats like Tolstoy, Kropotkin and Bakunin) have rural roots that found a response in his own nostalgia for the land, and secondly because its combination of extreme spontaneity and extreme rationality related it to romanticism, and especially to its political variety developed by Godwin and Shelley and transmitted through Robert Owen to English literary Socialists like Morris and Oscar Wilde. Like other anarchists who draw a sharp line between their own doctrine and nihilism, Read stressed the element of natural order in libertarian theories, a stress one can relate closely to his interest in the highly ordered artifacts of constructivist artists like Naum Gabo (also, incidentally, a professed anarchist). In fact, a conviction of the necessity of discipline, preferably self-induced, permeated Read's whole view of life. "To understand Herbert," his friend Frank Morley said to me, "you must remember that he was once an officer; he did not cease to be one when he became an anarchist." And in the sense that Read saw himself as a dedicated leader in a moral and aesthetic war, Morley was right. Perhaps here one can find, rather than in any unlikely regression into snobbery, the reason for Read's acceptance of a knighthood that ruined many of his anarchist friendships; he saw himself not as a titled member of an Establishment but as an errant licensed to seek the salvation of mankind through argument and especially through art.

The art was particularly important, for it was no dilettante interest that Read had taken in it since before the 1920s, when he made art criticism his career by joining the staff of the Victoria and Albert Museum. He believed that the power of art lay not merely in its form, however "significant," but in the forces which by symbolism it released from the collective unconscious, and that for this reason—though art must never be didactic in intent—its ultimate influence was a moral one. Men who lived by art would be men who lived by peace. Hence he considered that his greatest contribution to anarchism was the writing of *Education through Art*, which sketched out a libertarian strategy to supersede the outdated tactics of the barricades.

But *Education through Art* was itself part of the great circle in which we can see Read's life and achievement delineated, almost as in a Tibetan Wheel of Existence. For what he wished to activate and use as a means to liberate the grown man was the innocent eye of childhood, and for him that eye looked out through memory from the Yorkshire which he left as a child and to which he returned almost fifty years afterward, carrying, as the voice of the returning native says in *Moon's Farm*:

The illusion
that a voice in the wilderness echoes
in some green valley
the illusion that the wind
or a bird
will take up the seed I have scattered
on stony ground
and drop it in a
fertile field . . .

Perhaps Read did not find the complete happiness he had hoped for in his return to the place of a childhood which, in its greenness and its horizon-bound roundness and its isolation from the industrial existence of Edwardian England, had somewhat resembled the underworld of *The Green Child*. Both he and the land had changed. Yet at least he found a measure of creative renewal, and even though the physical world of the dales and moors, of the mills and farms (many of them ruined since he had left) seemed diminished in scale, nevertheless it was true, as he had said in *The Innocent Eye*, that "the realm is never wholly lost: it is reconstructed stage by stage whenever the sensibility recovers its first innocence, whenever eye and ear touch and tongue and quivering nostrils revive sensation in all its child-godly passivity." And out of this intermittent recovery of the lost realm came the last spurt of Read's creativity; a third of the poems he thought worth preserving in his final collection, and among them some of the best he wrote, were produced during the decade after he returned, like Olivero, to find the stream of inspiration running upward to its source. □

What Is Children's Literature?

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE: Adventures and Misadventures in the Realm of Children's Literature. *By Selma G. Lanes. Atheneum Publishers. 239 pp. $7.95.*

ROBERT SKLAR
Mr. Sklar is the author of F. Scott Fitzgerald *(Oxford) and editor of* The Plastic Age: 1917-1930 *(Braziller). He is writing a cultural history of the American movies.*

Over the past ten years I suppose I've spent most of my early evenings reading texts of picture books to two small children who have now become readers themselves. It was almost always a pleasant experience, in part because I tried to find books to please my taste as well as theirs. Yet for me the pleasure was chiefly in the moment; once the lights were out and the child tucked in, I laid aside the story and went back to my own work or reading or conversation. But what depths of memory or dream, fear or desire, would the child explore, awake or asleep in bed?

Maurice Sendak, comic and profound as always, reverses this theme in his jacket drawing for *Down the Rabbit Hole*. With the book closed, it is the parent who goes to sleep, and the child, passive-active with eyes closed but out from under the covers, moves toward a large rabbit, in Byronian 19th-century collar and jacket, outside the window. A tree stands by the bed, suggesting perhaps a sturdy growth and change within as well as outside.

Inevitably, then, the subject of children's literature raises the question of the unconscious as well as the consciousness of children, not to speak of the role of art and literature in their nurture. But surely this is too much burden to place on a half hour's bedtime reading in a world that includes parents, siblings, friends, schools, television, Lego sets, and other educational sources, not necessarily in that order of importance. Perhaps we need to know what literature is before we can grasp its place in the lives of children, or understand what children are before we can assess what literature can or cannot do for them.

In *Down the Rabbit Hole* Selma G. Lanes has taken the first approach, focusing primarily on children's litera-

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ture rather than on children, and narrowing her subject even further to contemporary American children's books and the Anglo-American literary tradition. Within these confines it is an engaging and often useful book. I admire Mrs. Lanes's taste in children's books because it resembles my own, and I like her ability to discuss American children's books from historical, economic, social, literary and graphic perspectives. Yet this volume is a collection of miscellaneous essays, a ramble here and there around the subject, and one wonders precisely what, besides information, Mrs. Lanes wants readers to take from her book.

Her general position seems to be that children's books like other literature can and should be life-enhancing experiences, providing a "quality of spiritual refreshment, of things seen simply and savored truly as they might have been on the first day of creation." She favors real works of art as against the sentimentality and falsification of experience, the greeting-card mentality, that pervades much of commercial popular culture. But as the quoted passage suggests, there is a core of gentility in Mrs. Lanes's approach that carefully avoids the terrors and havoc of life, of children's consciousness, even of a possibly not so gentle first day of creation.

This attitude seems to me manifest in her treatment of Maurice Sendak's *Higglety Pigglety Pop! or There Must Be More to Life* (1967), a beautiful and painful work of art. Her reading of the book, in my view, is all too sunny. Jennie the dog's introduction to life's mysteries is poignant if not tragic, perhaps a parable of maturing, of life as performance, of not being able to go back, of losing connection with those one loves and entering a world of impersonality.

The most provocative idea in *Down the Rabbit Hole* is Mrs. Lanes's assertion that the past quarter-century has been a golden age of illustration, with consequences analogous to the more widely heralded effects of television on consciousness. "It is entirely possible," she writes, "that a generation of children is growing up undeniably quick of eye but impatient with and even insensitive to the sounds and meanings of words." Her remarks about opportunities for advertising artists in the children's book field, however, seem much more valuable than her speculations about the future consciousness of a generation.

In this case as in others the restriction of focus to Anglo-American literary culture presents serious drawbacks. As soon as one broadens the view to more of the world's cultures the nature of the problem changes strikingly. Outside the Protestant cultures of the United States, Great Britain and Northern Europe, such picture books as comics and photographed stories have always played an unambiguously popular role both among adults and children. In Japan right now the adult comic book is one of the most creative graphic-literary forms. Perhaps it is simply true that American culture is catching up to the rest of the world in its acceptance of visual narrative in print media.

The important element, as Mrs. Lanes stresses, is the quality of graphic work for children. But it is wrong, in my view, to assume that excellent pictures develop one sense to the exclusion of others. Imaginative art in any form stimulates all the senses. Children who like picture books are just as likely to be enthralled by oral tales and music, and as likely to grow into avid readers of prose fiction.

The Anglo-American focus also severely limits the attention Mrs. Lanes gives to the European tales that form so important a part of children's literature—"Hansel and Gretel," "Cinderella," "Snow White," "Jack and the Beanstalk," and the rest. She discusses perceptively the differences between American "folk" tales like *The Wizard of Oz* and the European tales, but nowhere does she ask why American children still like to hear the Grimm stories, nor why they became a mainstay of that all-American entertainer, Walt Disney.

In fact, the role of terror and cruelty in children's stories—so marked in European tales, and prominent in Disney movies, too—is quite ignored in *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Of all the questions that might be asked about children's literature, these seem to me the most pressing: is there a psychic and imaginative function for terror in children's stories? Are there literary forms which help children cope with fears and terrors and others which merely exploit them? How can we tell the difference? A more consciously comparative approach would have brought these questions into Mrs. Lanes's perspective. Anyone who has seen the German *Struwwelpeter* books will know how live an issue terror is in children's stories elsewhere in the world, and how closely related to our theories of the human unconscious.

I suppose I am indulging the reviewer's exasperating habit of wishing the author had written a different book. And I wish that her study of children's literature had shown more than an impressionistic interest in the audience for that literature, and some familiarity with the studies of children's minds by Piaget, Selma Fraiberg and others. I wish she had taken a leaf from Elizabeth Sewell's *The Field of Nonsense*, that brilliant, neglected study of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear—a work revealing how literary form can provide insights into human consciousness. Mrs. Lanes has put her toe into the great pool of children's literature, and many parents, librarians, relatives and friends of children will be grateful for the information, opinion and recommendations she gives. But we still need someone foolhardy enough to dive in headfirst. □

THE DENSITY

my father twenty-one
on his passage to India
he drops the word
'nigger' in the road
and walks on ahead
and is gone
evaporated
up into the
smoky air
i pick it up or try to
it is heavier than i thought
i would like to clear it
away it will snap
the axle of my white truck
if i run the wheel
over it

but i cant
it is a mineral
denser than moon rock
its halflife is many years
there is no means
to rid air or
land of it

it is beginning
to emit its stench
shall i cover it
in loose dust? there is
not even as much down here
as up on the homely surface
of the moon

i attach
a chain to it and set
my truck in reverse
welldressed black men
are walking up behind
they are proceeding
where they know and go
on up ahead
and are gone the air
still splashed with their
palette in the white truck
it is dry and dusty
the dust
drifts down from the head lining

John Ridland

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That Terrible Boulder

THE PERFECTIBILITY OF MAN. *By John Passmore. Charles Scribner's Sons. 396 pp. $14.95.*

CALVIN BEDIENT
Mr. Bedient's book, Architects of the Self: George Eliot, D. H. Lawence, and E. M. Forster, *will be published next spring by the University of California Press.*

Most of John Passmore's book is a history of "perfectibilities," and is so dry—even the word is all sticks and rustle—that it makes one sympathize with the epigraph from D. H. Lawrence: "The Perfectibility of Man! Ah heaven, what a dreary theme!" Then the book bursts, in the last 45 pages, into a critique of perfectibility, and one sits up and takes notice.

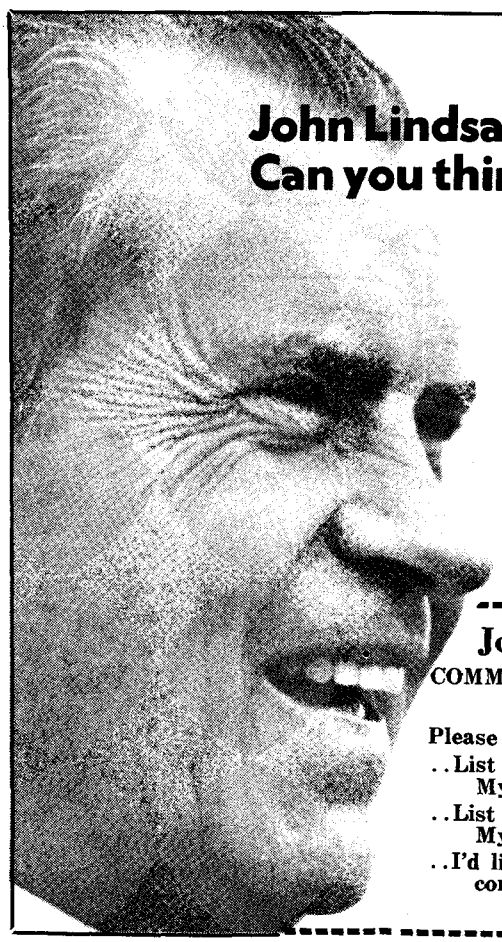
The history presents a farce of overreaching and counter-assertion. "All things are full of gods," Thales announced 2,500 years ago, and men have been trying to measure the god in themselves, or measure up to God, ever since. As if their lives were a ship and metaphysical perfection the horizon, they pushed off into the light of the Absolute. Toward the Boundless, said Anaximander, toward Being, said Parmenides; call it the One, said Plato. It was faceless, elusive, transcendent. Still, the soul is of it, or resembles it, said the philosophers, and our glory is to sail in its wind. Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, Philo and Plotinus agreed, though each designed his own "godlike" man.

But *man* is scarcely Godlike, objected the Christians—*that* tattered sail! The wind alone is simple, pure and absolute. Or so Augustine and Luther and Calvin were to argue. All the same, advised the sturdy fifth-century Briton, Pelagius, the sail had better be raised in manly fashion. God "has not willed to command anything impossible"—and has not His own Son said (for the Absolute has now a face): "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven. . . ."? Pelagius was condemned, but other Christians have echoed him. Indeed, certain extreme Pelagians, the Christian mystics, climbed, as it were, straight up the mast, threatening to leap from there into the Absolute, so confident were they that God was in them: "The soul lives the life of God," said John of the Cross.

We, too, see the horizon, modern perfectibilists were to say—but doesn't it simply mean that we can improve to an unlimited degree? Don't all horizons retreat? More, as men came to stand increasingly on their own history, and to gain competence in the world, they began to think that, God or no God, the object of perfectibility was the whole human race.

This was a heavy cargo indeed. How draw *that* to the horizon? Through education, said Helvetius and Bentham; through anarchy, said Godwin and Proudhon; through genetics, offered Campanella and Muller. Clearly, through science, suggested others. Let the current carry us along, said such students of dialectical progress as Kant and Herder, Hegel, Marx. Yes, the current, repeated certain evolutionists—Herbert Spencer, Bergson, Teilhard de Chardin.

All these beliefs are still babbling at once, loud voices coming strangely from a ship in mid-ocean and Augustinians are still shaking their heads over Original Sin and mystics are still climbing the mast, and the "new" mystics—like D. H. Lawrence and Norman O. Brown—are even proclaiming that God has been in our flesh all along, and Charles Reich has just announced that a sweet new human consciousness is al-



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ready here, and the waves—the waves are in an uproar!

In point of fact, objects Passmore, a little sick from all this motion, the ship has been swinging on its anchor the whole while. About the anchor he is a little vague, as if he cannot quite make it out there in the depths. Well, no use trying to navigate in a stationary vessel. Nor is this the worst of it. The horizon of perfectibility, whether celestial or secular, is blood-red, or cold, no place for human beings. "God did not make heaven for geese," declared Luther, but no nice person, Passmore implies, would be caught dead there—or in a Communist state, either.

The truth, he argues, is that the big loves—of God, of humanity—are "pseudo-loves," without responsible caring; they are neither civilized nor humane. Pindar was right: "Mortal things suit mortals best." So we ought to head back to the solid land of our homes and offices and, in the name of all that is humane and civilized, cultivate the "little loves": the "love of one's work, of one's friends, of works of art, of scientific and technological achievements, of justice, of political freedom, of one's community, one's wife, one's children."

Passmore's tone is firm, he is nobody's fool, and who can quarrel with a philosopher who insists that "the quality of a society depends on the quality of the loves it exhibits and fosters," or that what men achieve "will be a consequence of their remaining anxious, passionate, discontented human beings"? So one sits up and takes notice and does not much object if Passmore makes good sense seem a little dull. In any case, the distinctions Passmore makes among the terms "play," "game," "love" and "toil" are struck out admirably and, if we are lucky, will help bring order to the current chaos, generated around them, especially the first two.

Nevertheless, the book leaves one in a mood to make objections, and not least because it does not quite know itself, its own purpose. It is for so long a stretch a toneless digest, with only the most perfunctory criticisms, that when Passmore rises up to take on the very idea of perfectibility, the effect is abrupt and almost comic, as if Clark Kent, right there before our eyes, were changing into Superman.

Then, too, when Passmore does find his strength and begin to fling his opponents about, perhaps he is more wholesale than his argument allows. It is not perfectibility as such but only metaphysical perfectibility, mystical aspiration, the aestheticization of mankind into a grand harmonious order, that makes him anxious for our "little loves"; yet in the end all perfectibility seems to have shrunk, for him, into "the classical ideals of perfection," and these into metaphysics, and he is pinning the whole concept and effort to the floor. At the last, he leaves himself standing apparently alone, as if entirely without humane and civilized allies among the perfectibilists he has discussed, and as if he himself were not asking men, especially perfectibilists, to be better than they are.

Finally, farcical though the history of perfectibilism may be, Passmore's retreat into the modesty of small cherishings seems rather like pulling down the blind. There is something too comfortable about it, for all its insistence on the value of "care." Perhaps nothing moves the human race, that terrible boulder, except extravagance. We note "justice" and "political freedom" among Passmore's list of loves. But what would we know about these if it were not for men like Christ and Marx? In pulling down the blind, Passmore may be keeping out the glare, but he may also be keeping out the light. Cherishings are born, in part, of ideals, and ideals are born—alas—from perfectibilists. □

THE LIFE

during the 5 pm
rush at the 42d street subway stop I run
across the platform from a downtown
LOCAL to the EXPRESS, which
doesn't close its doors
anyway. both

trains wait. "I bet they'll close
as soon as I get off
to try the LOCAL," a man says

to me. he does
and the doors do

M. Steingesser

Bang Went the Pineapple

THE NEW ANCESTORS. *By David Godfrey. New Press (Canada). 392 pp. $10.*

DONALD CAMERON
Mr. Cameron is associate professor of English at the University of New Brunswick and a contributing editor of The Mysterious East.

By the autumn of 1970 the young English professor from Trinity College, University of Toronto, had become something of a public figure. Admittedly he had written for most of the important Canadian magazines; he was said to be working on a big novel about Africa, and Margaret Laurence was going around calling him the most talented young writer in English Canada. But it was not really as a writer that he was celebrated.

No, Dave Godfrey was better known, perhaps, as a publisher and an intellectual nationalist. Along with the poet, Dennis Lee, he had established the House of Anansi back in 1966. Designed primarily to publish fiction and poetry of high literary quality, particularly experimental work, Anansi had rapidly become the major outlet for gifted young Canadian writers. Yet though Anansi had won more than its share of accolades, Godfrey pulled out a year and a half ago to establish still another publishing house, New Press, with the novelist, James Bacque, and Roy Macskimming as his partners. Reversing Anansi's priorities, New Press was primarily political, left wing and nationalist, with a strong side interest in literature. It jumped into the market with an eclectic and interesting list—good poetry, the *Canadian Whole Earth Almanac*, books on energy policy, military policy, Indians, abortion, pollution, the impact of U.S. economic expansion on various aspects of Canadian life. And Godfrey himself continued to be general editor of a series on Canadian writers for McClelland and Stewart, editor of a book on Canadian University Service Overseas—a kind of nongovernmental Peace Corps—and so on.

The man was clearly an energetic operator who proposed to make an impact on Canadian public life. But the most talented of our young writers? He had published only one book of fiction, *Death Goes Better With Coca-Cola* (1967), a volume of stories which, though it had its enthusiasts, had by no means taken the country by storm. One reviewer dismissed it as "leftist soulful-

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ness," and others considered the stories so cool and detached as to show a failure of feeling. What would the novel be like? Would he ever finish it? Was he substantial or only flashy?

Well, last fall New Press did indeed publish *The New Ancestors,* and by now there is hardly a term of praise left fresh for it. "Brilliantly accomplished," said Margaret Laurence, "wise, entertaining, explosive, richly textured and splendidly structured." The Toronto *Star*'s Peter Sypnowich found it "a grand novel in the Dostoievsky manner—more ambitious than *The Brothers Karamazov,* really, because its historical sweep and psychological insight are exercised within the context of another culture, that of Africa, and it examines the ancient questions of authority and sensuality within the modern themes of imperialism and revolution." For the Victoria *Daily Times*'s Steve Hume it was "an intellectually impressive work that avoids pretentiousness with airy ease," and Morris Wolfe wrote in *Saturday Night* that it was "a haunting black web which ensnares the reader long after he has finished the book." The Edmonton *Journal* reviewer, Douglas Barbour, found it "a nearly total artistic success." In *Canadian Forum,* Phyllis Grosskurth called it "the richest, most compulsively involving novel I have yet read from a Canadian author," and in the current *Canadian Literature,* George Woodcock writes that *The New Ancestors* is "a fictional edifice in which hallucination and reality reflect each other in an extraordinary feat of experience transmuted." Not surprisingly, it won the Governor General's Award as best Canadian novel of the year.

The New Ancestors revolves around a small group of characters all of whom are close to public affairs in Godfrey's fictional republic of Lost Coast. Lost Coast itself bears a strong resemblance to Ghana, where Godfrey taught with CUSO for some time. Kruman, the Redeemer, its ostensibly Socialist leader, is selling it out, but he has his defenders —like Gamaliel Harding, former jazz drummer in New York, now a journalist for the government press. Harding's bastard half brother, "the irreverent First Samuels, Doublefees Boy, Bowler Boy, Marxman Spoker Number One," has gradually disengaged his allegiance from Kruman and thereafter joins a group of young radicals whose plan to blow up a new dam ends in death for all of them. First Samuels, however, contrives to kill Gamaliel in a crowd scene which is powerfully shocking.

Gamaliel's sister, Ama, has taken part in the Redeemer's erotic games, hoping to free her father, but when she marries

REVIEW OF NATIONAL LITERATURES

ANNE PAOLUCCI, *Editor*

Spring 1971 VOL. II, No. 1 IRAN

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the strange, warped English Marxist, Michael Burdener, she abandons her family in favor of Michael and their son Cricket. When Cricket dies, neither partner can help the other. The marriage disintegrates in anguish; Michael is deported, though he later secretly returns. What drives Gamaliel and Ama, children of the madwoman Delicacy? What obsesses Michael, raised by nuns, believed orphaned until his torpedoed and vulgar father astonishingly returned? Are they driven by ideas? Love? An urge to justice? Probably all those things—and, additionally, the kinds of games their parents have played on them, the games they are passing on to their children. Godfrey believes, and makes his readers believe, that ancestors never really die: they live on within our veins and manipulate our lives.

Private and public life; myth and ideology; dream and wakefulness: where are the boundaries? For Godfrey, the boundaries between reality and unreality are themselves unreal; one state flows into another, culminating in the extraordinary penultimate section of the book, "In the Fifth City," in which (to take one thread only) an American agent named Rusk is assassinated over and over again, in a different way each time. First it is knifing, then poison; later it is an exploding basketball; on another occasion Rusk watches two women making love, via television, but the image is delayed, and as he watches them couple, one of them emerges with a pistol and shoots him.

Rusk is speaking:

> We have heard this many times, of course, the Chelsea Drug Store Argument, this defence of Americanism in terms of "genuine" scientific socialism, genuine people's capitalism, the greater production rates, the vast flexibility, the peasant's territorial instinct which can be verified and must therefore be quantified and melded, Stalin's essential Czarism, the rape of Hungary, the people's slaughter of the Indonesian communists, the sheer impossibility of a collapse of post-Keynesian capitalism, the advanced sexlife of the Detroit auto-workers, etc., etc., etc.
>
> What we are interested in now is the dirtyfaced, tooth-gapping urchin in khaki shorts who enters with a wooden tray of small pineapples.

Rusk buys a pineapple, sticks a knife into it, and it explodes, killing him yet again. Ambitious though it is, *The New Ancestors* is also full of humor. Anyone who wants to know anti-Americanism as an emotion rather than a position will discover it in the "Fifth City" sequence, along with a great deal more. Yet the incident is by no means merely funny, and the sudden emotional shift when the urchin enters is a typical instance of Godfrey's subtle but complete control of tone and rhythm.

The man for whom thought, art and life style fuse into a seamless whole is rare indeed, and fortunate: Godfrey admits to being such a man. There is something obscurely pleasant, too, in the fact that an author who has, among a good many other things, made art out of his distaste for the American empire should have turned the tables in yet another way.

Americans can purchase *The New Ancestors* at 300 West Adams, Chicago —the branch office of a Canadian publishing house called New Press. Yet the ironies persist: branch offices are, after all, implicitly imperialistic. One hopes Godfrey can see the humor even in Chicago. □

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The Sound of Our Speaking

AN EAR IN BARTRAM'S TREE: Selected Poems, 1957-1967. *By Jonathan Williams. University of North Carolina Press. 160 pp. $7.50.*

ROBERT MORGAN

Mr. Morgan is the author of Zirconia Poems *(Lillabulero Press).*

> The poet is the man who names
> things and honors the dead.

One of the most hopeful signs in contemporary poetry is the revival of interest in language, in the imaginative use of linguistic substance. This is an interest in words themselves as more than a transparent medium—as something to be explored, shaped, but more important, attended to. That words are things and things words may have been understood by many of the older generation along with Francis Ponge, but for most of the young poets that idea opens a door out of the instant, into history.

Though many of the best practitioners among the adherents of this poetic program have been active and even known for years, it is only recently that they have begun to be recognized for what is distinctive about their work, rather than incidental. Of this group, three who are especially interesting are John Ashbery, A. Ammons and Jonathan Williams. Each has gone so far in his own direction that the only thing uniting them is a primary interest in language as a texture. Ashbery and Ammons are so original that it is difficult to talk about them in terms of previous American poetry, but in the case of Jonathan Williams we have at least a partially defined plane on which to project his achievement.

First there is his use of William Carlos Williams' masterful example, recording and refining the music of speech, the imaginative work done by people talking, stretching and sharpening language for the satisfaction the speaker gets from doing so. Jonathan Williams' dialect poems give us language in the process of being inflected, enriched. Here are verses from the section called "Blues & Roots/Rue & Bluets":

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lands them fingers really
dreadfulled me I
couldnt tie
nary broom one

had to soak em in water
hot as birds blood

. . . I
still tie thesehere brooms

pretty good

But the same is true when he speaks calmly in his own voice, discovering the poetry line by line:

the tulip poplar is not a
poplar it is a magnolia:
liriodendron tulipifera.

the young grove on the eastern slopes of
Mt. Cammerer reminds me
of the two huge trees
at Monticello, favorites
of Mr. Jefferson . . .

As with William Carlos Williams the pleasure is that the ear finds the poetry for itself, without being prodded by even a trace of poetic gesture. The surprise makes it work. More than any other poet, Jonathan Williams has used the Objectivist principle, the idea that a poem is first of all a linguistic, phonetic, graphic object. Too often the Objective label has been used for disposing of Zukofsky without reading him. Actually the principle itself is more important than any specific poetry associated with the "Objectivist Movement": without discounting inspiration or revelation, the poet is to think primarily in terms of what he has on the page, the construction, the linguistic structure, which he can change at will. Imposing the idea of structure over the emotional intention of the poem enlarges the possibility and durability of the emotion. As in an analogous way Baudelaire found that disgust and even cruelty could deepen and extend the force of his poetry, the objective poet seeks to go beyond the immediate feeling that may have prompted the poem, and put down the means, the structure, through which the reader can re-create the poem for himself. "Objective" out of respect for the reader, for language, and for emotion. For poetry is the creation of space in which the poet stands to talk, and which the reader comes to inhabit as a vantage point on the world.

It is easy to belittle as "merely formulaic" or "flatly descriptive" what Zukofsky would call the intellective pleasures and resources of poetry. Take an example of Williams' multi-dimensional wordplay, "Slab (for Carl Ruggles)":

ONE
TONE
ON
ONE
TONE
ONE

STONE
ON
ONE
STONE
ON
ON
ON
ON

Or in another direction, "Silers Bald":

just in front of the
round iron john
in the beech grove
the fresh bear droppings
give you

something
to think about

What is "objective" about "Slab" is the central column of O's and N's, the ON ON ON ON suggesting the beat of Ruggles' music, the expansiveness and duration of art, the imagination setting off reactions that keep going, transmuting, and the sense of building up music or a lifetime with phonemes, units of time, as a carpenter constructs a cabinet. Also Williams displays the kinship and interaction of words, by pulling four near rhymes out of the word "stone" and laying them one on top of the other in a "slab," their voices speaking polyphonically. This alertness and attention to words themselves as they are written and spoken and understood is peculiarly his own. The objectivity of "Silers Bald" lies, of course, in the straightforward description, the calm literalness which floats over the sharp resonance of experience at work.

It would appear that Robert Creeley has contributed to the extension of Williams' range through his own ability to imply almost anything in a few short lines of monologue. By implying rather than stating his images, Creeley moves faster and with greater precision in his poems than do most of his contemporaries. His talent for embodying states of mind and relationships that before seemed incommunicable, hitting the most elusive shifts exactly on the nerve, is what Jonathan Williams has apparently learned from him. Williams has used that technique to keep expanding his field of vision, trying new words, new voices, surprising himself. There is a relentlessness in the varieties of his manners and intentions. As he himself says, half-ironically, "I was born in Tom Wolfe's town . . . and am afflicted with the same Buncombe County Virus. It's something in the water, demanding that one go everywhere, eat everything, drink everything, know everything." These quotations will demonstrate the range of his voice. From "The Bitch-Kitty":

hast thou not never,
O Nouveau-Riche Peach-Queen, yet paused
to smile upon the blooming earth?
not "just divine" but green

(I find you highly offensive, suh, *she said*)

And from among the many elegies in *An Ear in Bartram's Tree* is this one, "To Charles Oscar":

may there be stiff reeds
for your hands
among the asphodels,
Charles

and wind
to move them
over the bronze water
onto paper

and Lethe for us,
left
with your shattered
inkstone

Williams has an unusual talent for arranging the verbal collage, joining quotes and bits of conversation into almost seamless structures. Reading his poems impels us to read them aloud and repeat them to another person.

I saw the South suckin hind titty.
I saw the North suckin hind titty.

He takes the language eroding right now in our mouths and cultivates it, shapes it, and speaks it to life. For Williams more than anyone I know, poetry is an active art, the language being spoken.

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And in his political poems he always takes the risk of clarity. "Offense is provided for those who will take some," he says in the preface to "Amen/Huzza/Selah."

Heretofore most of Williams' work has been published by his own Jargon Press, and his audience consists largely of those who have heard him read on campuses and in meeting halls and private homes. But with this book of selected poems I hope readers will get to know this work which has been going on almost as though in secret for fifteen years. Above all, Williams is a maker, and much of what he makes is striking and original. □

ARCHITECTURE

FREDERICK GUTHEIM

Mr. Gutheim, a consultant on urban affairs, lives in Washington, D.C.

Quite a lot of good summer and early fall afternoons remain in which to visit the Frei Otto show, which will be on exhibition in the garden of the Museum of Modern Art until October. On the day the New York show opened (after several postponements) I found myself by coincidence under another Frei Otto tent (or "fly" to be more precise) in the improbable location of the garden of the Bishop's Palace in Wells (Somerset). The British version was red, and very handsome, too, glowing in the artificial light. The museum's structure in white is much more elegant, and being larger displays to great advantage the voluptuous curves that are the special delight of tension structures. You can contemplate these easy forms without remembering that the museum is only slightly less solvent than New York City.

Most of us first came upon Frei Otto when we visited his German pavilion at Expo '67. This huge exhibition hall ranked with Buckminster Fuller's sphere and Moshe Safdie's Habitat among the architectural events. But it took Conrad Roland's encyclopedic *Frei Otto: Tension Structures* (Praeger, 1970) to persuade me that the Montreal building was neither especially creative nor refined, taken in the body of the architect's work.

The Modern Museum's accompanying exhibition—under the tent, naturally—is definitive and should enjoy a long and successful tour. It might be described as a well-edited version of the book, but it goes beyond that. Ludwig Glaeser's presentation of Otto by building types and categories is a lot easier to grasp than Roland's straight chronological sequence. He makes clear such concepts as that Otto is "a manager of construction energy," or the difference between the architectural imagination and "an inventor's speculative mind," as he defines Otto's.

Perhaps it is this pure technology that bugs me. Otto has never been involved with anything else, since he started designing airplanes at the age of 10. Indeed, he was 23, after a long spell as a fighter pilot and prisoner of war, before he started his architectural education. He spent six months on a study tour of the United States in 1950, and taught at Yale in 1960 and the University of California in 1962. But throughout he has been committed to the idea that new materials and structural systems are the important things. Even the architect's own house at Warmbrunn, started in 1970, seems rather pallid and lacking in personal quality.

What the exhibition does show is the rich diversity of applications of tensile structures. Cushion roofs, membrane dams, pneumatic structures (for greenhouses) and dome shapes (for grain silos), hanging containers (instead of tanks on water towers) are some of them. Within this sequence there is a recognizable evolution. And it is reassuring that the best structures are the most recent: in this case the retractable roofs over the field events and swimming areas of the forthcoming Olympic Games in Munich. In that design, shown in model photos, even the steel masts are exciting elements.

Glaeser keeps pointing out that tensile structures are not tents, but that is a technical comment. The charm of these structures is very tentlike because of the translucence. They are not roofs. That is what makes one think of Eero Saarinen's real tent at Aspen; or the original canvas roof of Frank Lloyd Wright's drafting room at Taliesin West—which Olgivanna Wright has irreverently replaced with translucent plastic.

The show at the Modern is well worth a visit, not least because it has been produced in large laminated fiberglass panels, a technique that seems a real breakthrough for outdoor exhibitions. The material is alleged to be proof against lipstick, flow pens and other instruments of vandalism, but how it will stand up to an attack of aerosol spray paint remains to be seen. The translucent synthetic fabric of the fly also seems impervious to New York's continuous fall of soot, cinders and oil smog particles.

I should add that the credits of this exhibition are deliberately vague. The structure was designed by Richard Larry Medlin and a team of students in his Lightweight Construction Center at Washington University in St. Louis, but only after life had been breathed into it by Frei Otto himself. □

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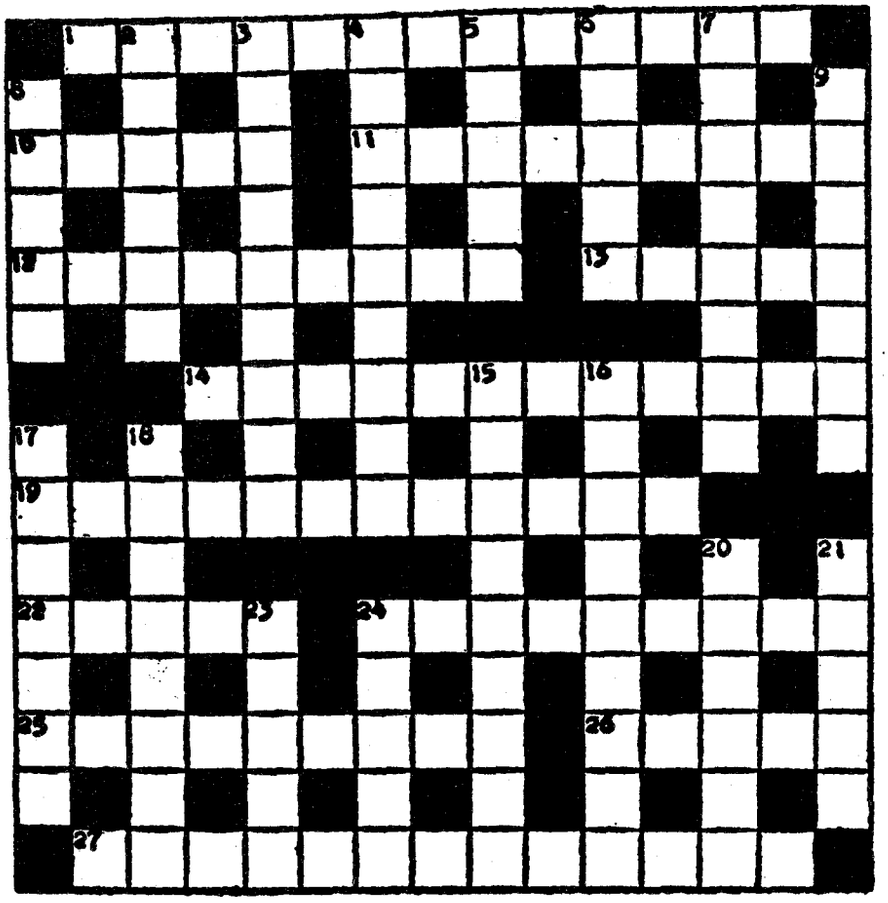
Crossword Puzzle No. 1406

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 10 This tune is associated with a pretty light accompaniment, often followed by an impressive blow-out. (5,8, 2,3)
11 What used to be a day for planting, still back in the place where trees are likely to be different. (9)
12 Not necessarily cases for musicians—used to carry more personal gear. (9)
13 To tell the truth, one might in anger. (5)
14 Gas? It's enough to make one laugh! (7,5)
19 Not places to look for the Gettysburg type, unless one has friends there. (7,5)
22 Is illegally offensive holding the papers together. (5)
24 By chance is it taking place? (9)
25 Sling nets, possibly for little birds. (9)
26 Suffrage seems to be nothing in an environment of sin. (5)
27 What one might bring to the picnic in a sheltered area, Communist China having no capital. (7,6)

DOWN

2 Many on entering show it, but it sometimes goes for tennis as a stage stereotype. (6)
Tip a drink because of it? (9)
You could arrange it to be a surtax, especially for painting, music, etc. (5-4)
5 Johnson asked for them to be loosely flowing. (5)
6 The son of Osiris needs a hundred less than the full group of singers. (5)
7 The expansion of flowers is then as you might wish to make it. (8)
8 Even Caesar was affected by such blind attempts. (5)
9 Arbitrarily punished—creamed, perhaps! (7)
15 No contest when one is. (9)
16 Major distinctions of rank? (3,6)
17 Havelock Ellis said it is life itself. (7)
18 One's ticket does, as one confesses. (6,2)
20 The priest, for instance, might have supper around four or six. (6)
21 The saint whose eve should show up one's mate. (5)
23 Hail should be a relief? (5)
24 Depend on this being a joint! (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1405

ACROSS:: 1 Cum laude; 5 Patter; 10 Signals; 11 Haggard; 12 Ukase; 13 Abscesses; 14 Elite; 16 Daedalus; 19 Meatball; 22 Beech; 24 Seasoning; 26 Offal; 28 Hairpin; 29 Olivine; 30 Awning; 31 Skeleton. DOWN: 1 Costumes; 2 Magna; 3 Abasement; 4 Dastard; 6 Argue; 7 Transmute; 8 Radish; 9 Chaste; 15 Iteration; 17 Ambrosial; 18 Chaldean; 20 Amiens; 21 Logbook; 23 Asthma; 25 Orpen; 27 Flint.

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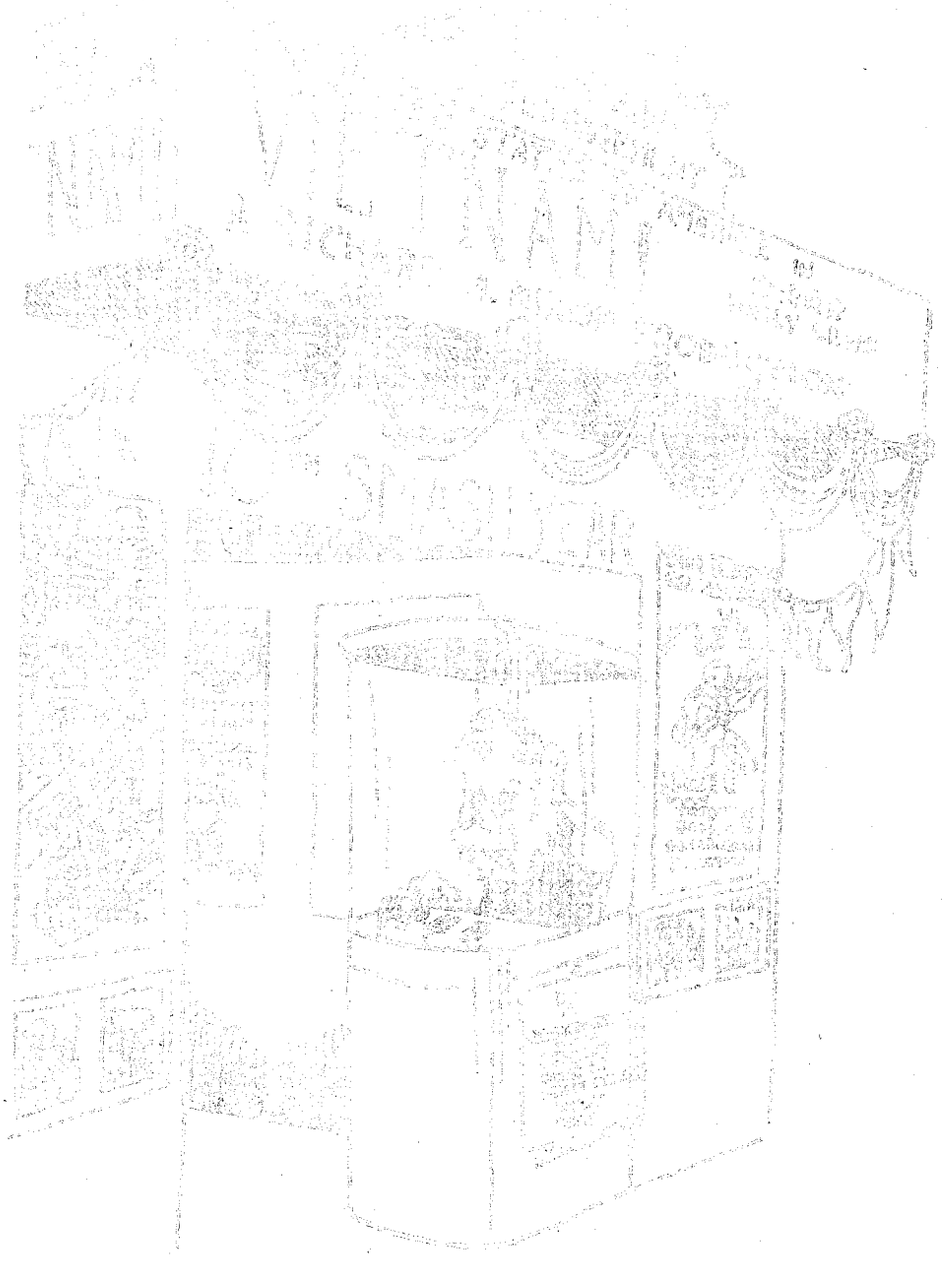

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